IN THE LAND OF PAGODAS

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The Famous Shwe Dagon Pagoda, Rangoon.

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by

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To the valiant Christian youth
of America this little book is

DEDICATED

with the hope of the author
that it may inspire in them
a love of those other youth
who live on the opposite side
of the earth

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A View of the Harbor of Rangoon

CHAPTER I

CALLED OVER

A LITTLE party of eager missionaries, we lined the rail of the *Lunka* as she plowed her way through the yellow waters of the Gulf of Martaban. Beckoned to the Orient to answer insistent calls from newly opened fields, we were at last on the very threshold of the "silken East." Home ties had been strained, and were beginning to lose their pull, while our eyes were longing to catch the first glimpse of the land of our adoption.

The view was not assuring—as to scenery. Our expectant gaze met low mud banks rising out of the delta flood, a closer look descrying them fringed with palm trees, whose spindling trunks crisscrossed on the horizon line and lifted wavy tufts into the shimmering heat waves of the late afternoon.

Our steamer slowly swung in a gigantic arc up toward a broad opening in the interminable flats. The sea-gulls, welcomers to every coast, wheeled and screamed about our heads. Away

to the north a smoky mist shrouded the land, seeming strangely out of keeping with the soft sunset light that bathed the turbid waters around us.

We were wondering what next after mud and mist, when someone suddenly exclaimed, "Oh look!"—and there, far ahead, rising sheer out of the lowlands, a tapering shape towered from the gloom that hid its base, its gilded point catching a glint of the golden west. Dominating the entire landscape, the first object of interest, it held our keen attention and started a thought-train of wonder and curiosity.

Then at our side a fellow-traveler, who had been over the way before, volunteered an explanation: "The Shwe Dagon Pagoda, the largest of its kind in the world. Among hundreds of thousands of others it stands supreme. Its top is over five hundred feet above the city below. Its sides are partly covered with gold plates; and parts of it were studded with jewels in the old days. Some say they are still."

We caught our breath with renewed interest, and gazed long and fixedly at the far-away shrine, utterly oblivious of our near approach to the entrance of the Rangoon River. But twilight slowly settled down, shutting the great tower from view. Now the river banks were

close up and showed signs of human habitation. Yet here were other pagodas of every size, their tops peeping from behind clumps of palms or bamboo and showing boldly white in the thickening dusk,—every one a model of the father of them all. Then the full realization stole upon us that at last we were in "the land of pagodas."

It is a wonder country, is Burma. Once under its spell, the lure of it is irresistable. With a fair share of the sordid and the unbeautiful common to every heathen land, yet it seems to the traveler different from others,—and better.

Among the American missionaries entering this far eastern country in the early years of the present century were Heber H. Votaw and his wife, sent out by the Seventh-day Adventist Mission Board. Like Adoniram Judson, the pioneer in this field, the Votaws did not start for Burma. They had set their hearts on India, but God set their feet on Burma. And it was not long before their vital interests were entirely wrapped up in gospel endeavor for the attractive Burmese.

As the years passed, the little company grew into a church in Rangoon, a parlor meeting-place into a church hall, and two workers increased to six, with some native helpers. This

start was almost wholly among English-speaking people. But the great Burmese Buddhist population held out needy hands. The thousands of simple-hearted Karen people of the hills were open to the gospel truth; and there was no school for the children and youth, the most susceptible of all heathen to the uplift of Christianity. Slowly the pleading need of a school became a great burden to the missionaries, and found voice in earnest prayer to God to open the way. There was no fund available that might be tapped to start new enterprises, for the Board was driven to refusing some pleas because of the many from the world field. But the school of their dreams and prayers did materialize in a most providential way, and this is its story.

While laboring in Rangoon, the Votaws interested a number of telegraph operators in their faith. The government owns the telegraph system in Burma, and employs a large number of men in its various stations over the country. When one of these operators was in the midst of his study of the Bible truths presented by the Votaws, he was transferred to Meiktila, in Upper Burma, a civil and military center of about seven thousand people, situated on the shore of a beautiful lake about three

A Typical City Street Scene Showing Indian Servants and Children

hundred and twenty miles north of the metropolis. This man and his wife began to tell their neighbors some of the Bible truths they had heard in the city. Two of these neighbors were advocates (lawyers), one of them being in government employ and a man of wide influence and excellent reputation.

The telegraph operator was rather apathetic then about the truths he had learned; but his listening neighbors were anxious to know more. So the missionaries in Rangoon were requested to visit them and teach them the Bible. The answering of this call provided an opportunity for the weary workers to procure a change from the humid, unhealthful atmosphere of Rangoon at that season of the year, to the much dryer climate of Meiktila. They were soon on the ground, and their visit proved to be memorable. The little group were ere long rejoicing in the truth that moves men's hearts. A. W. Steevens, the government advocate, became an apostle of the printed page, scattering at his own expense large quantities of gospel literature over the whole of the Indian Empire. The telegraph operator now fills an important position in Indian mission work.

But, the school. Among the acquaintances of Mr. Steevens were prominent Buddhists who

were impressed, as he talked to them of his new hope, by the health and educational phases of the gospel the missionaries taught. A training of the head, hand, and heart appealed to them, especially that of the hand, for they saw in this the hope of Burma. It is regrettable that they did not have a higher motive also, but so far this was a step in the right direction. The Burmese people are losing favor with the foreigner because the Burman as a rule will not or can not learn the practical trades of modern industry. Many foresighted Burmans of education and culture are seeing the trend, and have become alarmed.

"We want technical schools," they said, "where our boys can learn trades. If you see a Burman who is skilled in a practical trade you may put it down that he is an ex-convict. A native must commit a crime and be sent to jail in order to learn a trade, for the jails and reformatories are the only places in the country where trades are taught."

They were so concerned that their boys receive this all-round education, which we have been more or less successful in carrying into practise for so many years in America, that they offered to help financially to establish a technical school. To make good their offer they banded

16 **Beautiful Meiktila and the Lake, from the Top of an Old Pagoda**

together, elected a chairman and a secretary-treasurer, and started a subscription paper. In a very short time the fund thus raised grew to several hundred rupees. (A rupee is about a third of an American dollar.) This was an unusually bold move, for the Buddhists generally are suspicious of Christian missionary propositions. Then the missionaries were urged to do their part, and to make good the gospel of symmetrical education.

Such an opening could not be ignored. But with all the goodwill and help of local enthusiasts, to start such an enterprise would involve great expense on the part of the Mission. And there was no provision in the budget for a school in Burma; and to all appearances there was not likely to be for some time. It was a perplexing question. There was but one thing to do,—appeal to the Board at home for permission to advance, and for aid for the promising project.

The time was on the eve of the General Conference of 1909, to be held in Washington, D. C. Convinced that a plea for this school and also for help to start work among the Karen tribes of the country, should be presented in person to give it adequate force, our pioneer, after overcoming many obstacles that stood in the way, took passage for the homeland, and

unexpectedly appeared to attend the session of the Conference. He was given a little time at the close of the report from India to speak for his field, and he made the most of the opportunity. Beginning with a brief description of the land and the people, he grew enthusiastic as he recited the encouraging progress of the work, and eloquent as he pleaded for a quick supplying of Burma's crying needs. One of these needs was set forth in a clarion call for an educator.

"We need a qualified school man," said the speaker, "one who has been educated in 'the university of hard knocks.' Some of the most prominent Buddhists of Upper Burma have besought us to start a school for their youth, where manual training shall be given. The mission schools of other churches are following the government curriculum for the sake of government grants-in-aid. So much is required by the government before this financial help is given, that the schools are unable to give anything like adequate instruction in Christianity. The people who are calling for us are willing to help to the best of their ability in a financial way. They have promised to work in every way they can to make the school a success. May God impress some strong young man and wife to volunteer for this work.

"All Burma is aquiver today, on tiptoe with expectancy and anxiety. Since I have seen the marvelous manner in which news travels there, I am persuaded that the gospel can be quickly given. It is a matter of continual wonder to us how rapidly events of all sorts become known to those illiterate millions. But one thing that I have ever seen seems to me to be a fit illustration of the swiftness with which the knowledge of the happenings of the day is passed from mouth to mouth. How distinctly I remember that day years ago when with blanched faces the dwellers in a little frame house, set far out on the prairie, began to labor with eager, feverish haste to protect their home from the dreaded prairie fire. But the rolling, bounding flames gave little time. They were driven by the wind, and what was the puny work of man to stop them! And Christ has compared the workings of his Spirit to the blowing of the wind. So when the Spirit of the Lord of hosts has breathed upon his people and the nations, I am sure that the gospel will sweep across India and Burma with mighty triumph, burning away every barrier which Satan has erected to stay its progress. Let us be ready against that day."

The writer of these lines sat within the sound of that summons to achievement for God in the

foreign field,—sat all tense with the gripping entreaty of it And his heart had no other answer than, "Send me."

So a few months later found us about to enter the gate of "the land of pagodas." And as we strode down the gangplank into the rabble of coolies, and trod the historic soil where many a missionary hero and heroine lived and worked and died, we were exceeding glad for what the future held in store. Nothing exceeds the ardor of youth in the face of Christian service.

In the narrative and description which follow we record experiences as they came to us. Our way led through the port of entry; into direct touch with the cosmopolitan crowd with its strange dress, customs, and religions; on up country to the scene of our labors, deep into the intricacies of the languages and mission problems; through struggles, sickness, disappointments; to overweights of joy in hearts won for Christ. We invite the reader to wonder with us at the strange and curious, reflect our smiles at the amusing, share with us our depression when the clouds hung low, and joy in our fruition when the tasks were finished.

CHAPTER II

THE GATE

THE giant Irrawaddy washed a hundred soils from remote banks, and cast them mixed mud at its mouth. In this mud men laid the foundations of Rangoon. The races which swarm over the city are as varied and blended and plastic as the mud on which it stands. A city cosmopolitan indeed is this. Other cities may have all the other species of mankind, but they lack the picturesque Burman, for he is a home body. Rangoon has all races, to the extent of almost crowding out the sons of the soil. The sights and sounds and smells of both worlds here mingle in bewildering disorder.

The gold, silver, precious stones, and silks, which in other nations are hoarded and hid, are in this nation spread to the gaze of the throng. And the greedy, the thrifty, and the industrious of all climes flock to the golden show for a part in the division of the spoil. The laughing, care-free people view with equanimity their glory flow into the coffers of strangers, and Burma

An Attractive Rangoon Business Street with Burmans to the Front

complacently surrenders her wealth-right to the passer-by.

The immigrants land at the port of Rangoon, and many of them stick there and cast their lot with the common run. They have come to a land of opportunity compared with other countries of the East. For here are fertile soils, rich minerals, and abundance of trade, with no fateful caste system as in India, no unsettling revolutions as in China, no burdensome taxes as in Japan. But do not mistake. The country is not rich in the real sense. What is here, however, is all on the surface, as far as the Burman is concerned. He doesn't put his wealth in a stocking—no napkined talents for him. It goes into his stomach and onto his back. But he leads the simple life, and is happy, so happy! After all, what do those who hoard desire more than this?

Rangoon is not Burma. First it is India, then China, then all the Orient, then Europe and America. The Burmese are its ornaments; and their towering golden pagoda, the attractive feature of many a beautiful vista, represents a people and a religion which are fast weakening under the influences of the spirit of the West.

Shall we "see the sights"? The very modern electric car on which we ride takes the corner

with a shriek as we turn into Dalhousie Street. The stone pavement is just ceasing to throw back the sun's glare. It now steams in its Turkish bath as the water-carriers muddy its back. Our conveyance seems strangely out of place among the primitive men and methods. Look at the motor-man on our car. He wears a semi-European suit of dark green cloth, of the pea-jacket, high-water variety, bounded below by bare feet and above by long oily hair, roughly done up, turnip shape, under a little red fez. The man who collects fares is, like the other, a native of India, and is dressed identically the same. He is just learning to count money, and may shortchange us; but never mind, the passengers are only too willing to help him. The car company should not lose by his ignorance, for at his elbow is a subinspector; and soon an inspector will cast his critical eye on him and us, and in turn will cower before the chief inspector. These inspectors ride at intervals on all cars, and watch with eagle eyes. Our tickets are punched and punched and punched. While we are trying to recall some lines about "other fleas to bite 'em," the gong clangs loudly, and we peer ahead to see three stalwart coolies making frantic but slow efforts to tug their high-wheeled, heavily loaded cart

off the track. A line of shoulder-pole carriers string by with their labored swing, taking rice from the wharf to the warehouse, where the sign, "All kinds, good rice, cheaply, for sale," does its duty in attracting the attention of the English-speaking public.

Farther on, the wide street presents an unbroken mass of conglomerate humanity. Burmese women gossip at the house doors, while their children dodge among the crowds afoot. Chinese workman, plying any and every trade, sit cross-legged on the sidewalk or at their shop fronts. The curb is lined with various business contrivances dignified by the name of shop, from a little basket at a corner, with a woman squatting behind it, to the Chinese restaurant-keeper, with his long table, furnace, cooks, and waiters, serving eatables by wholesale.

Beyond the curb, confusion inextricable—cars, bicycles, motors, carts, carriages, rickshaws, and luckless pedestrians—where a collision means a fight and a miss is good for a smile. In the center, at cross streets, towers a turbaned Punjabi policeman—supposed to preserve order. His huge stature and dignified demeanor give him immunity from danger; and there he poses, well-nigh oblivious to all that chatters and clatters past.

Bamboo Scaffolding to Give the Big Pagoda a New Coat of Gold Leaf

The evening is the joy-time of the day, and each one takes his "constitutional" as suits him best. But what a multitude there is! One writer has called them "food for census," and that idea presses in upon us in spite of our efforts at singling out a few. They are lumped off in the mass, like so many clods of earth,—different, but who cares? Yet each one has an individuality—and a soul.

This is *where* the "other half lives"; it would require volumes to tell *how* they live. Even those who have been long on the ground sometimes wonder whether they know the people or not. In the turmoil of the seething millions of the East, one sees the crowd, but it is difficult to see one. At every dwelling it seems as if all the folk are at home, and relatives and friends are visiting them.

We alight and meander through the "night bazaar." Scores of temporary stalls pack the curb of the wide sidewalks, and the night is aglare with gaudy lights. Here is great assortment, from pins and peanuts to beds and blankets. This fellow with the file-rasping voice makes our passing hideous with "Ek rupaya kamal, chay paisa, chay paisa, chay paisa!" ("A thing worth 32 cents for three cents," a tricky appeal to the gambling in-

stinct of the Burman). This is the time and the place to palm off the defective and tinseled articles whose defects are unnoticed, and whose tinsel shows golden in the glaring light. We know this, yet we are drawn on by a lure inexplainable to see what is not worth seeing, and to buy what we do not want. A week ago we asked at one stall for a towel, and—it must have been published in a newspaper which all read, with our likenesses attached—now towels are thrust at us at every turn all along the line. Towels call us, towels spread before us, towels flap in our faces, towels shout after us. But there is method is this. For we buy, and why? —to distract attention, or to satisfy onlookers that we use such articles, or to show that we have the money? It may be for any of these reasons more than because we really need the towel. With half disgust we turn away, and wish not to look at a towel for a week. Yet we are not to be let off, for soap and brushes must needs go with a towel, and these are urged at below-cost prices. We are led to believe that the motto of these men must be, "Persistency, thou art a jewel." There is an end, however; and at last we extricate ourselves, and the gloom envelops us as we start for home.

The morning draws us to the bazaar for the day's food supply. Most of the shop-men are Indians, not Burmans; and of the few Burmans nearly all are women. A dozen boy coolies, with baskets, surround us away up the street. We select one lank fellow with a smile, a good knowledge of prices, and a poor knowledge of English. A friend had an amusing experience with one of these "basket wallahs." They often use English in the idiom of their own language. With them there is no difference in the way they say "too much" and "very much." This boy said that what the *sahib* was buying was "too nice." My friend told him that "too nice" means nicer than it should be, and that it really couldn't be "too nice." "Well," returned the boy, "One nice, then."

Did you ever bargain? I mean, juggle prices with a merchant. If you haven't, you have missed—shall I say a joy? There are few one-price dealers here. A native's asking price is not his selling price; and usually the latter is one-fourth or one-third of the former. It is a habit that many of them would gladly break away from; but, like the tipping habit, it sticks. Says the shopkeeper: "What can do, sir? Master asking price, sir. If I say proper price, sir, Master no buy. Master ex-

pects less, sir. If no sell for less, sir, no can sell, sir."

To beat a man down in his price is always a necessity, and never a hardship for the man; for, unless the buyer knows the right price, the crafty merchant is sure to get more than the article is worth. And if you do not know the price, he is a sharp enough student of human nature to find it out, in spite of evasive questions and answers. Every purchase involves a battle of wits. At first the newcomer finds it difficult, but later it changes to a pleasurable habit which holds such a fascination that one actually wonders if ever he can feel satisfied to buy from a merchant who will not lower his price. But before the trick is learned, the novice has many a crestfallen experience of seeming to triumph at a low figure, and later finding he has paid two prices for his purchase.

This is the usual haggle:—

"What's the price of these guavas?"

"Ten for six annas, sahib."

"What? Say, if I wanted to get rich, I'd start a shop here and rob people as you do. Tell the proper price. I'll give you two annas."

"Nay, sahib, nay," laughing, "Five annas proper price."

"Will you take two annas?"

A View Among the Royal Lakes, with Shwe Dagon in the Distance

"Nay, sahib, cost four annas."

"No, they don't; you know you can buy them for one anna."

You start away, and he says, "Four annas, sahib, and no profit." You continue, and he shouts for you to come back at four annas. You call that you will give three annas. He refuses, but when you are out of sight and hearing he sends a boy running after you to accept your three annas. Of course you return and pay the three annas, and perhaps are discomfited to see him chuckle at the prospect of a good profit. But if you win there is a fascination about it, because it brings a consciousness of superiority.

The bazaar is huge, and offers for sale almost every article which the East and West produce. Prices range widely, from trivial eatables which are almost as cheap as the handful of earth from which they grew, to fancy tinned and bottled imported stuffs. We hold our noses while passing through the meat and fish departments, sneeze in the spice-room, and are prodigal with our eyes among the silks. All this is sordid, but it is Rangoon.

Another day we break away and breathe free at the Royal Lakes Park. This beautiful retreat provides the lungs of the city. In the rainy season the gentle slopes are a lavish

green, but the dry season sees hosts of coolies deluging them in a vain effort to coax the dying year into a "green old age." The roads hum to the tune of the motor-car, and happy picnicing children sport in the groves. The golden crown of the view is the towering sharpness of the Shwe Dagon Pagoda, its sleek descent throwing back a dazzling glitter to the tropic sun.

Rangoon contains only a quarter-million people, but all these are in evidence. The English rulers, comfortably parked in their own section, sway the fortunes of Burma's metropolis with beneficent justice. The strongest and lowest passions of thousands of debased human beings here find vent; but storms are brief, and Oriental lethargy binds all minds in a magical spell, whose power Occidental minds sense, but will always stop short of experiencing.

One of the Ways up the Hill to the Pagoda

Chapter III

THE WAY IN

THE way into Burma is among the pagodas; and the way into the heart and mind of a Burman is through an understanding of the point of view of the religion of the pagodas, —Buddhism. A tarrying in Rangoon means a visit to the great pagoda that overtops the city and appears in the distance of every beautiful view which the port affords. The first sight of it from far down the river is a more than sufficient stimulus to closer investigation.

We started for the noted shrine armed with a wealth of curiosity to learn all we could about Buddhism in general and pagodas in particular—and we returned satisfied. A friendly Burmese guide to accompany us, and a willingness on the part of the caretakers of the place to impart information, supplied an answer to every question that arose. We shall take occasion to introduce our readers to the heart of Buddhism as we proceed.

Alighting from a car at the foot of the steep-

sloping artificial hill, we were at once awed by two gigantic images of lion-like animals with gaping mouths, which sat on their haunches on either side of the stairway. But some Burmese boys playing gleefully on the toes of the huge beasts tended to reassure us. Like Bunyan's pilgrim, we were soon past the lions in the way, and climbing the broad stone steps, hallowed—yes, and hollowed—by the patter of many devoted feet.

The ascent is tiresome, but not without diversion. We may buy candles, flowers, toys, gold leaf, and trinkets of all sorts at the booths that flank the upper steps; or we may rest on some crude seats and look out over the city; but we hasten on to the top, for there is much to see, and tell.

The last step upward discovers a level plateau about the size of a city block, with the tall Shwe Dagon in its center. Around the base of the immense tower is a paved circle, somewhat irregular, and hemming this in on all sides are structures of every conceivable shape and nature,—scores of little pagodas, roofed-over shrines, images in barred cages, rest houses, flower and trinket shops, bells, platforms, poles, pillars, glass cases with relics, decorations in endless variety—all in the utmost disorder as to

Pagodas Built on Famous Balanced Rocks —

Among the Mountains of Burma

arrangement. It looks as if every particular ornament had been erected by a separate person and each had placed his where it suited him best. The meaning of all these will become more evident as we delve into the mysteries of the religion.

Now a pagoda is a pile of rice with a lotus bud stuck in the peak of it.

At least it is said that is how the idea of its form originated. Whatever its fashion in other Buddhist lands, this is its characteristic contour in the land of pagodas. It is round, large at the base and small at the top, ending in a point. The sides curve inward and are not smooth, but rise in irregular swells, or "collars." And just below the top is a bulge, the lotus-bud effect. At the very apex a *htee* (umbrella) is fixed, which has the shape of an ordinary parasol one-fourth open, and is usually made of metal plated with gilt or gold. The edges of the *htee* have dangling from them little bells or pieces of metal and glass, and these tinkle musically in the passing breeze.

But what is a pagoda, and what is it for? It isn't a church or a temple, for it is solid throughout, and thus there is no going into it. It isn't a tomb, like the pyramids of Egypt, for no one is buried under it. It isn't a monument

to commemorate some event, although some famous pagodas hark back to some legendary event for the purpose of their founding. Nor are the pagodas, except in very rare cases, built in memory of a man, although individual men and families often erect them. They are not limited to number, for hundreds of thousands of them encumber the land; nor to place, for they obtrude into every vista and are found everywhere, from the shelf behind the door or in a man's pocket to the top of the highest hill and on well-nigh inaccessible rocks in the mountains; nor to size, for they vary from watchcharms to the gigantic Shwe Dagon, reaching 370 feet above its platform of 166 feet.

A pagoda is a shrine, erected originally over sacred relics, such as a hair or a tooth of Gautama the Good (Buddha) of far renown; or it may be built over images or books inclosed in a chamber in the center of the foundation. As there are not enough relics to supply the large number of pagodas built, imitations of real relics are put in. Every village has at least one pagoda, and in many villages there is a group of them, in all stages of decay. This is the sacred center, and here the faithful assemble for the various religious duties. The word pagoda is not used by the Burmans, for the people call the structure *paya* (lord).

Pagodas Everywhere

Each of these unique shrines was built by some man or group of men to get merit. It is the most meritorious act that can possibly be per-

formed, and insures the builder at his death an immediate entrance into the highest form of heavenly rest. Hence the large number of pagodas. The merit is granted according to the goodness of the one to whom the pagoda is dedicated, and not according to the character of the builder. So rich men who can build big get the most merit, regardless of their characters. No merit accrues to anyone who repairs a pagoda, except those of great note, repair-merit going to the original builder. Consequently there is little repairing done, thousands of the structures are in ruins, and new ones are being built all the time. They cumber the ground in the crowded land; and sometimes when no one is looking a sacreligious farmer does not hesitate to topple a small one over and put the ground into crops. The material of their building is flat bricks and mortar. The whole is plastered on the outside and covered with whitewash or gold leaf, according to the affluence of the giver. However, since but few ruins are ever removed, besides being a land of pagodas, Burma is a land of brush-covered brick piles.

Perhaps even more numerous, but less conspicuous, than the pagodas are the myriad images of Buddha seen everywhere throughout

the country. The manufacture of these idols is a recognized craft, and excellent indeed is the workmanship displayed on many of them. Sculptured in alabaster and marble, or moulded in shining brass, they are things of beauty compared with the hideous gods of Hinduism.

You may have a Buddha of pocket-size at a pittance of a price; or may make a pilgrimage to a famous shrine and gaze with awe at an enormous

A Land of Brush-covered Brick Piles

likeness of Gautama the Good towering many feet into the air. Clustered about the feet of pagodas, housed under little roofs at the roadside, and perched in the recesses of the hills,—from every corner images of the famous hero of

righteousness look out upon the world with serene apathy.

The image-maker may not try his skill in varying the form and features of his product. Every Buddha looks just as nearly like all the others as expert imitators can make it. The figure sits tailor fashion, with the sole of one foot turned upward. The long-fingered hands rest quietly on the lap. The body is draped in a plain priestly robe with a sort of turban for a head covering. The lobes of the ears reach to the shoulders.

There are a few noted exceptions to the conventional seated image, the most widely known being the standing Buddhas of Pagan and the huge reclining Buddha of Pegu. The latter dates from ancient times, and for many years it seems to have been lost even to the Burmans themselves, big as it is. It was found accidentally while engineers were prospecting for a railroad. The undergrowth covering it was removed, and now it can be seen from the train as it sleepily smiles on the passer-by. It is known as the dying Buddha, and is said to be the largest statue of a human being in the world, measuring 180 feet long and 46 feet high at the shoulders. Several persons might comfortably sleep on its ear lobes.

A Typical Large Image of the Buddha

Sculpturing Buddhas from Stone

The faces of these Buddhas naturally draw attention. Plainly Mongolian in form, the features are pasty and expressionless. Yet there is a beatific, half-serious, half-smirky smile that rests about the mouth which impresses the stranger that the original was very conscious of a passive, meditative goodness within. There is nothing that is repulsive about the whole figure, a little that is admirable, and much that is weak. It is meant to show the saint in deep contemplation of great good.

Such was the posture and benign look of the divinely-human Gautama, according to tradition; and in imitation of his serenity his followers today longingly seek the greatest peace of heart possible to mankind. Is it any wonder that his constant worshipers grow to look like him, and that the peaceful Burmese face is a picture of the hero of Burma's religion?

Burmese people dearly love bells, and no religious center is without them. They tinkle and ring and boom as wind or worshiper supply them power. They range in size from the tiny silver ones on the fringes of the pagoda *htees* to the enormous Mengon bell, second in size in the world and the largest suspended bell known.

The bells of Burma are not cast in such

beautiful curves as the ones the Westerner makes, but they send forth sweet tones. The big ones are not set high in towers, nor do they have clappers dangling from their centers. They are suspended within reach of all, and a mallet is usually provided for the tapping. All bells are consecrated to religion, and are used for no other purpose.

Surely it must be that the devotees of Guatama need to be called often and insistently to worship, seeing that there are so many bells. But not so; for the Buddhist must come to his worship, if he comes at all, without being called. He knows his duty and after he has said his prayer and given his offering he proceeds to tap the bells to call the attention of the good spirits to what he has done. We visitors often took a hand in hammering on the bells, for the more they are rung the better, no matter who does the tapping. However, in the case of the largest ones a curious investigator concludes that a steam hammer would be required to bring a sound from them,—especially the famous one at Mengon.

Buddhism is kept alive by the *pongyis*, or priests, and the foreigner in Burma is impressed that there are enough of them. *Pongyis* are the members of a religious order who have given

The Famous Dying Buddha of Pegu

themselves as followers of the lord Buddha in seeking a perfect life. In the large cities they

number into the thousands, and even the smallest village has its collection of yellow-robed, shaven-headed figures living on the hospitality of the people. Their dull dress represents the rags of poverty and the individual *pongyi* can possess nothing, not even the smallest coin, though his order may be increased with goods.

The *pongyis* are not ministers in any sense. It is not at all their business to help others, either bodily or spiritually. Cutting themselves off from the world by poverty, celibacy, and idleness, they spend their time concentrating their minds on supreme righteousness. They confer a great favor on the mourners by attending a funeral, and they give opportunity to all to gain special merit in religion as they go about from door to door with their begging bowls and allow the people to put food therein. Does the foreigner say they beg? They no more beg than a bank president begs who saves your money for you.

There is much good to be seen in the *pongyis*, for they are in the main pure, and hold strictly to their vows. They inculcate charity and hospitality in the people, and maintain a commendable peace of mind in an otherwise heedless and headlong generation.

Be it known that all Buddhist males are at

some time consecrated to the priesthood, but most of them do not go on to become *pongyis* in reality. Those who continue in the sacred work are too likely to be of the lazy sort who prefer idleness to an active life. Yet they make some remarkable sacrifices. They live in monasteries called *kyaungs* situated near the pagoda centers and apart from the dwellings of the common people. These monasteries are the most elaborate and costly buildings in the community; but withal the *pongyi* lives the simple life.

Cleared of vague philosophies and disputed points here is the story of Buddhism:

Many centuries ago a young prince in India, named Gautama, became suddenly aware that this world is full of death, disease, and suffering. He had been shielded by his parents from viewing anything that would cause him pain of heart, until he was a young man. Then on a ride through the country he saw human sufferings as only India can show it. Thereupon he left his home and riches and started out to find a cure for the troubles of existance. After years of solitary meditation he is said to have found the secret of life and the one method of gaining supreme happiness. He took the title of Buddha (lord) and went forth gathering disciples and teaching his belief. Being purer than Hinduism,

Buddhism spread throughout India and gained millions of adherents. But later it was driven out of the Indian peninsula, seeming better suited to the Mongolian peoples to the east and north. Now it flourishes in Burma, Siam, China, and Japan.

Gautama did not claim, nor is it claimed for him, that he is or was a god. He simply found the way for human beings to reach peace of soul and reached it himself. Buddhists claim that he is not worshiped as a god, and although there are millions of images of him, and people worship before them, it is said that this is no more idolatry than is our worshiping in the presence of the picture of Christ on our church walls or windows.

Everyone naturally wants to know what Gautama's secret of life and happiness is. In short, it may be expressed thus: Peace and happiness are found in long-continued and intense contemplation of good. That is, if you would be happy, go apart from other men and do nothing but think about and desire righteousness till you become righteous. The Christian knows that the world has tried this plan many times in its history, and has found it wanting.

Gautama taught that all living things are on a series of steps, the highest forms above and the

A Group of the Priestly Class, Showing Three Stages in the Development of its Members

lowest, below. Every human being is born somewhere on this ladder of existence. Inseparably connected with existence is pain.

The lower orders suffer most, the higher orders least, and the only way to be free from pain is to cease to exist, that is, to keep on ascending the ladder till the top is reached. The state into which one enters at the top of the ladder is called Neikban. Yet the Buddhist says that this ceasing to exist is not annihilation. In fact, it is difficult for anyone to explain just what it is. This is the way one writer describes it:

"He falls into a calm and never-ending cessation of existence. He knows nothing of others, nor of the world, and so is a stranger to all feelings of joy and sorrow. He contemplates fixedly the abstract truth. He remains perpetually in a sacred calm, unmoved by any feeling whatever, in lifeless, timeless bliss." This is the Buddhist's ideal of heaven, but to the Christian it does not appeal as being desirable.

The lower steps of existence are terrible hells in which men suffer the most awful tortures. The teaching is that everyone has many lives, and at the end of each life they are immediately born into a lower or higher order of existence, according as they are bad or good. This transmigration of souls is a strong belief. Burmese nursery tales and schoolbook stories are many of them based on the idea. One such reads somewhat like this:

Once upon a time a school master was out walking with his pupils, and they came to where a herd of goats was feeding. There was one goat that seemed to be the leader of the herd; and the boys asked their master if they might stone this goat to death. He consented; but as the boys ran for stones, he was surprised to see that the goat was laughing. He asked the goat the cause of his laughter, and the goat said, "Long ago I was a school master, and was one day out walking with my pupils. We met a herd of goats, of which one goat seemed to be the leader. The boys asked if they might stone the goat and I consented. They killed the animal, and for the sin of taking its life I was condemned to live ninety-nine goat-lives. I am in my ninety-ninth life now, and as soon as the boys stone me to death I will take your place and you will take mine." Needless to say, the boys did not stone the goat.

The way up the ladder of existence is won by meritorious acts, the requirements of which are plainly laid down in the Buddhist law. They correspond in some degree to our ten commandments; and the followers of Jesus see much in the precepts of Gautama to commend. Also, the Burmese generally are to be admired for the way they live some of the truths of their

belief. Their hospitality is unbounded. Along the hot and dusty roads are often seen little stands containing earthen vessels which provide the "cup of cold water" for the thirsty wayfarer. In the villages, at the shrines, and at frequent intervals over the country, are built little rest houses, the hotels of the natives, where a traveler may take possession free of charge, and be assured a shelter during his stay. This is practical religion, whatever the motive of the donor may be.

However, the acts of merit work out too often in long prayers, formal ceremonies, and deeds which have nothing to do with the character within. Prayers are said, not prayed,—and nearly always not understood, for they are in a sacred language unknown to the people.

Although the Burmese are firm Buddhists, yet there is a vivid trace of the old devil-, or spirit-, worship in all their religious beliefs and everyday acts. Spirits, called *nats*, are everywhere, especially evil ones; and they must be avoided or appeased. A haunting fear comes with the darkness, and the lonely night traveler yells or whistles—and often runs—for evil stalks abroad in the night.

Maung Myit, our Burmese servant for some time, was a middle-aged man and strongly

courageous; but he feared the spirits. He lived in a village half a mile away on the next hill, and went home every night rather than sleep alone in the little house we provided for him. He was always unusually industrious about his work at the close of the day, in order to get home before dark. But sometimes it was necessary for him to stay till the shades of night were deep. Then, when he was ready to go, he procured a stick from the woodpile, and wrapped a cloth soaked in oil around the end of it. Laying this on the floor by the back door, with matches ready for lighting by its side, he stood and clapped his hands loudly to scare the spirits off so that he could get a good start. Then he quickly lighted the cloth, waved the brand frantically over his head, and tore down the road at top speed. We would stand and watch the torch as it was borne on with undiminished vigor till it disappeared behind the bushes at the village gate. And we could testify that no fire-scared spirits would molest Maung Myit.

The Christian observer is impressed with the inadequacy of the Buddhist religion to give soul satisfaction. It has a passively good, witching lure about it that appeals strongly to the easy-going dweller in a tropic clime. In

precept excellent, and ranking second to Christianity in the high standard of its moral requirements, it has a purifying effect on the baser forms of Oriental religion. But its precepts are nowhere near being carried out. And right there lies its inadequacy; for Buddhism is without a saviour from sin. Relying on its eternal reward for its chief hold on its devotees, and that reward nothing, or worse than nothing —a ceasing from individuality and existence— what else could be the result but a life-long desire never satisfied? After all, the chief difference between the religion of Christ and all other religions is the one fact that Jesus saves.

CHAPTER IV

STRANGERS WITHIN

NEARLY every community is undergoing a change in these days. Either by stormy revolution or by quiet growth, modern ideas are seizing the public mind. The seven-wonder achievements of our time are inspiring new life in the minds of the peoples of the Orient especially; and Burma is not without her progressives. The new Burma seems destined to be revivified from without, with the Chinese and the Indian as the chief agents of the change. The European can not move the stolid East; but it will move itself, in time. Like her women, Burma will mother any one; and she seems in a fair way to renew her thinning blood by quiet assimilation of the best and the worst in the alien.

In situation, Rangoon is a part of Burma. In inhabitants, Burma is only a part of it. It is first India, for we meet the Indian on the way; and he fills the vision when one first lands at the port. The Indians are not the most

Indian Coolies Unloading Rice from Up Country

influential in changing Burma, but they are the most numerous of all foreigners; and sheer numbers have an effect. Some would affirm that they are a dead weight, but it would be

better to say that they are a check to progress overswift; for the Burman is spasmodic, and the Chinese is proving himself very wide awake.

The English follow the very just policy of giving first chance in governmental aid and favors to the original owners of the country over which they rule. All are treated fairly, but Burma is governed primarily for the Burmese. Yet in spite of this advantage, which is not inconsiderable, the Burmese are fast losing hold of the country financially, not to the English, but to the Indian and the Chinese. The household servants, the shopkeepers, the money lenders, the police and soldiers, are largely Indians, not alone in Rangoon, but all over Burma. And they have entered to some extent into all other occupations. In the course of their work these classes handle large sums of money, and their natural bent is not to spend it. It is hoarded or sent to India, whither they themselves very generally return when they have amassed what to them is a fortune, or when they become superannuated.

Every year at the time of the rice harvest the ships from Madras and Calcutta are overloaded with thousands of coolies coming over to reap Burma's chief source of wealth. They spread all over the great flat lands of the Irra-

waddy delta, living in beast fashion, slaving all day under a hot sun as they gather the grain almost stalk by stalk. The end of the ingathering sees them herded back to India, each with his wage-pile, in the aggregate a vast sum which might just as well be left in the country of its production. There are enough Burmans to wield the sickle, but the majority have the habits of a king, with the purse of a pauper.

In order to pay off his coolies, the Burmese farmer must dispose of a large part of his crop. He is unduly delayed in shipping his paddy (unhulled rice) to the mill because the Indian railway station master (Indian because reliable Burmans are scarce) will not provide a car unless he is given a "present." By the time the farmer's returns are all in, he usually has not sufficient rice or money remaining to keep his family till the next harvest. So he mortgages his future crop for food and seed. The *chetty* (Indian money lender) is at his elbow, willing to make a loan at exorbitant interest. And thus it goes on from year to year. The average agriculturist is ever behind. He works hard, too, but not "according to knowledge."

These *chetties* are an abomination. Their shining bodies, half-naked, are partly covered with thin, spotlessly white cloth, and their fore-

heads and chests are decorated with white marks. They are the leeches of the country, clean as snakes are clean. Woe to the man who

Rice Piled High, Burma's Chief Source of Wealth

falls into their money-itching hands. Ten per cent a month is their not-uncommon interest demand. In a word, these chalk and cheese-cloth artists of lucre are—

> At times of plenty, underrated;
> At stringent times, appreciated;
> At every time, most soundly hated.

Their skill, accurate accounting; their music, the clink of coin; their art treasures, government stamps; they are wrapped in greed and clothed in avarice.

The Burman does not fancy making a statue of himself, nor accommodating his stride to that of a hundred others. The discipline of army life is irksome to him. So the thousands of police and soldiers for this land are picked from the giants of the Punjab and from the fiery little Gurkhas of the Himalaya foot-hills. Also there may be political policy in policing one country with the people of another, at least in India and Burma.

The Indian has been pulled, or has thrust himself, into every matter pertaining to the well-being and progress of this cosmopolitan country; and while slow and very often unskilled, he can usually be depended upon. He "camps down alongside" and sticks. Having

crossed the big water of Bengal Bay to get here, he believes he has lost his caste thereby. Of course many of his ways and tastes which grew from caste distinctions are not dropped; but class hatred is not odious in Burma.

Many Indians marry Burmese women. There are more Indian men than women, as is usual in a country of immigration. Also there are many more Burmese women than men. Cases of Burmese men marrying women of another nation are almost unknown; but appearances lead us to believe that the Burmese women will marry any one. As a consequence, there is a rising generation of Indo-Burmese. The Caucasian of the Indian and the Mongolian of the Burman do not make the best blending, in the judgment of Westerners. But this new race mixture is destined to have much to do with the shaping of the future of the "land of laughing women."

Burma is Policed with Giants from the Punjab

The Indian, silent, solitary;
The Burman, laughing, ever merry.
The Indian, slow and plodding worker;
The Burman, shirker or a jerker.
The Indian, dressed in white, or duller;
The Burman, draped in brilliant color.
The Indian takes the world as serious;
The Burman, as a joy delirious.

John Chinaman takes off his queue to progress, and we take off our hats to John Chinaman. (Who of those who know him will question the appropriateness of this given name? What John suggests to the average English reader's mind, that's the Chinaman.) Views of Burma are incomplete without giving our friends of the Middle Kingdom (beg pardon, Republic) a prominent place. In America we do not see the Chinaman at his best. It may be he is not so seen in China. Be that as it may, in Burma he is seen at the best the writer has had the privilege of seeing him.

The American is jerky and hilarious compared with the Chinaman, who is steady and serious. He simply leans against what the Westerner pushes, but he is always leaning. No obstacle can long withstand that constancy of labor and that taking of everything to heart. The Chinaman has a destiny. I fully believe that

we can not in a lifetime learn to understand his processes of mind. And that is not to say he is inferior. He is different.

The Chinese associated with Burmese don't fight. They fit. And that, too, like my carpenter's best dove-tail joint. Usually the weakenss of the one is evened by the strength of the other. Their ancestry, religion, and traditions are much the same. Their intermingling produces an excellent combination. It has been our observation that the children of the mixed marriages are fortunate in possessing many of the virtues of both parents. They work and save with the father, laugh and dress with the mother. Burma is stretching social hands toward the populous nation to the north; though in government she is tied to the West. The Burmese character, at least, is destined to be greatly modified by contact with the surrounding peoples. This light-hearted folk have many admirable traits, but they are not of the kinds which survive in our practical, workaday age. Considering every thing, a blending of the strong characteristics of both nations by race union will be the best boon which either can bestow on future Mongolian generations.

Generally speaking, a Chinaman works hard and long, saves his money, attains skill in a

practical trade, and is strictly honest. The Burman, still generally speaking, lacks all these virtues; that is, they do not seem to be strongly inherent. If he has them, they have been put on by supreme effort. But the Burman is happy, good-tempered, lovable, and has excellent taste in the fine arts, all of which the Chinaman must seek. Both like to rule, and are not very amenable to discipline. Both are inveterate gamblers. Let it be understood that we are speaking of these traits as general tendencies of the majority. Every people exhibits all degrees of desirable and undesirable features.

With slow but sure energy, the Chinaman is "at it" early and late. He has come to Burma with his "hand in," and has proceeded to build a reputation. In Burma the skilled carpenters, cabinet-makers, leather-workers, metal-workers, and contractors are very largely Chinese. Also large numbers are employed as bank clerks and accountants. John's methodical ways make him especially valuable as a director and executor of large public works; and while he is not generally found to be a civil engineer by education, and can not take the place of one, he already knows, or is fast learning, the best ways of doing things.

"Have a look" with me at our Chinese wood-working teacher at the school. We wonder

that he can turn out a chair equal to the best in the West, and yet seem to have so few of what we consider facilities at his hand. Though seemingly crude, his methods are scientific and up to date in "conservation of natural energy." He is in the business "on all fours"; for his normal capacity is almost doubled by the use of his toes as a standard, or vice. Such a tool has the advantage of not encumbering his tool-box. His work-bench is eight feet long, ten inches wide, two feet high at one end and one and one-half feet high at the other, thus being strictly a bench and not a table. He sits on it. By means of numerous pegs and wedges used in conjunction with square holes in the bench-top he manages to duplicate processes which would seem to require more complicated appliances. Instead of being one-sided and awkward as he planes, he sits astride his work (is literally "on the job"),

Hong Lee, Our First Chinese Carpenter

and gives it the benefit of a straight-arm push.

No, he does not do everything backward —very little, in fact, that I have seen. With two pieces of iron shaped by the local blacksmith, two wooden uprights, a bamboo pole, and a piece of rope, he sets up a one-foot-power lathe which is a marvel of simplicity and effectiveness. And again, no tool besides power-run machinery can bore a hole so quickly as does his string-and-rod "brace."

The Chinaman in Burma has taken his cue from the homeland and has cut off his queue. Never can it be said again that a "pigtail" hangs down every Chinaman's back. And now that he is no longer tied to the past by the hair of his head, he is making radical advances in other ways. As we see his sturdy industry and independence, we can not but heartily wish him Godspeed.

You stretch your stiffened limbs,
  Phlegmatic John;
And with a mighty stride
  The world moves on.

CHAPTER V

THE BURMAN HIMSELF — AND HERSELF

THE Burman thinks his land is a good place in which to live, else why is he so willing to stay there and the foreigner so willing to come? If the latter is like himself, he must be there for the pleasure it brings, for the Burman's conception of happiness is not that which is found in anticipation, in sacrificing for the future. He sees no satisfaction in the acquiring of wealth as such, but only in its spending. Because money does not have time to settle on him, he has made his land a more attractive country than many in the East; for even that gaiety which is but the gloss of happiness has its lure. His is the bliss of the untutored mind, the optimism of the simple life. The wants and worries of modern civilization have small place in his daily—no, not routine, for he hates it—in his daily change. Did they but know it, Epicurus is the patron philosopher of these people of a land of plenty.

The Burman is such a man as you would

A Burmese Government Officer in Official Dress

look at three times in the street. Let us bother one of a type who is approaching us, by indulging in a stare which he has brought upon himself by dressing in so much color. And what an exquisite taste he has for color and its combinations! Not such combinations and hues as Americans would put into a smart make-up, but such a color scheme as we would put into a room—ideal for the Burman, and much admired by the visitor to these shores. His head-piece is of a delicate tint of green silk, his coat of white, his lower garments of dark-green changeable silk, and his shoes are covered with olive velvet. The soft tints of pink and red are also favorites. No hideous stripes and sharp contrasts of gaudy colors are to be seen.

As to the form of his dress and the method of his dressing: Take two yards of silk and wrap it around the head at the temples, tucking in the end so that a corner waves plume-like, and you have his hat; tighten a little the loose flow of a short kimono, and you have his coat; extend a flour sack to the size of a barrel, cut out the bottom, put it on over the head and lower it till the top reaches the waist and the bottom just clears the ground; overlap the ample girth in front, twist it into a knot and tuck it inside the belt thus formed, and you have the

"trousers"; for shoes, take soles and make uppers sufficient to form a little three-cornered pocket for the toes, or two pieces of padded tape may rise from between the toes and fasten at the sides. His diminutive turban gives him a jaunty appearance, his coat makes him look cool, his hobble-like skirt shortens his step, and his sandals cause him to drag his feet. The educated classes of people in the towns are now affecting Western shoes and stockings and an almost-European coat. The modern umbrella, common the world over, has largely displaced the flat, Japanese type. The women dress

A Youth in Characteristic Burmese Dress

in the same way as the men, except that they have no headdress but combs and flowers, their coats are cut to a little different pattern, and the skirt is fastened in a different way. The people are of medium height or small. Very tall or very stout men are few.

And Another who Affects Half European Style

The true Burmese trousers are said to be tattoo. Most of the men and boys are tattooed from the waist to the knees. The tailoring of this pair of trousers, which is guaranteed not to rip or wear, is a painful ordeal of boyhood. There is a tradition that at first the higher classes in the towns adopted this method of distinguishing themselves from the jungle people; then the latter followed the townspeople so as

not to be thought ignorant; and now this disfigurement is going out of style because it is said to mark the countryman. Besides these trousers that won't come off, the Burman wears a thin, tight shirt and flowing Chinese trousers for underwear.

A look into the face of our subject reveals his relation to his neighbors of China and Japan. But his eyes are more open and less oblique than theirs. He can not grow a full mustache or beard, and the few hairs that do appear are naturally not welcome. Partly to save shaving, he carries in his pocket a small pair of pincers, and has recourse to pulling out the intruders by the roots.

The Burmese are generally tidy and clean about their persons, and just the opposite about their surroundings. There is great hope, however, for a man who comes "next to godliness" in his daily bath. The favorite bath-rooms are front yards and village well sides. By a dexterous manipulation of garments they maintain decency, and yet get a thorough scrub and pour.

The visitor is impressed with the happy expressions on the countenances of these people; and though he is kept awake at night by the yelled songs of a belated joy walker, he feels that dull care rests lightly upon their shoulders.

They are indeed a jolly race. This, with the abundant fresh air of their open houses and their frequent bathing, grants them quite good health in spite of the food they eat, which is usually abominable. The inside of the platter

The Ordeal of Being Tattooed

remains unwashed. In the case of many, they are good-looking until they open their mouths.

Rice and curry are the bread and butter of Burma. Rice is the staff of life, and curry is the rod. Curry can not be described at one sitting. Like American hash, it may be anything, and tastes like everything. It often has

a meat basis—fish, flesh, or fowl—contains bits of a variety of vegetables and spices, and has the consistency of a stew. But if the uninitiated should shut his eyes and taste it, he would affirm that it consisted of stewed peppers; for chillis are freely sprinkled in. One little chilli in a curry sufficient for a large family is enough to cause an unwhipped alimentary canal to call lustily for water; but these people can eat down the little vegetable misnomers raw and unaccompanied, without a change of expression.

Ngapi is a representative of Burmese dietary abominations. It is simply rotten fish. The smell of it beggars description. It combines all the offensive odors we have ever sensed. Yet this outrage to the olfactory organs is one of the most toothsome titbits of a whole people. We have seen children of the poor licking the juice of the stuff as it dripped from freight-cars at the stations. Still, the Burmans do not have a monopoly on disgusting foods.

In common with most of the natives of India, the Burmese indulge in the use of a preparation of betel leaves and lime, called by them *kun*. When chewed, this produces a red juice, and the first sight of an open mouth containing it is as startling as the bursting of an artery.

In time the teeth turn black. If to this is added crooked and rotting incisors, and a stench for breath, as is often the case with the jungle people, the facial opening is a forbidding cavern to the assiduous users of the tooth-brush and the mouth wash. The use of *kun* is not universal, however, and lately the cigarette is substituted for it,—not to say that this is an improvement, except in appearance.

Both sexes, all ages, smoke, smoke, smoke—anything from leaves and chipped wood to opium. Tobacco is most commonly used, but it is not chewed, smoked in a pipe, nor taken as snuff, but is formed into cigars. Most of the cigars are cheap and large—so swelled with chipped-wood stuffing and corn-husk cover that the lips can not be gotten over the near end with propriety.

The Burman is respectful in the presence of authority, and his manners are good. As a social companion, he is a very likeable person indeed. He is nearly always at leisure for a visit, and few can be as pleasant as he. But his "little behindhand" is well developed, and business and managing ability are lacking. Whatever business the Burmans do is managed largely by the women. I verily believe a Burmese woman would rather sell than eat. Her glory lies in

bargaining and making change, while her husband passes her the goods.

The Burman is slow to wrath, but quick when he gets there. He is not often seen fighting, but seems temporarily insane when he does begin, and fights to kill. Perhaps because the terrible consequences are known, every non-participant in a combat tries to stop it. I have witnessed a number of encounters between both boys and men, and every time the combatants were separated by their friends.

At a great woman suffrage convention in one of the large cities of America a noted suffragist was making a speech on the conditions of women in all lands. She had just returned from a world tour, and was enthusiastic over the prospect of the growing freedom of women and their increasing participation in the affairs of the world. At one moment in her speech she burst forth with something like this: "Ladies, I found that women in far-away Burma have been given the vote. Burmese women in the city of Rangoon may cast their ballots in certain local elections on an equality with their husbands and brothers."

It was a glowing report, and it was true; although it does not give a true picture of the progress of woman suffrage in Burma. This

A Burmese Lady of the Very Fashionable Type

lecturer knew more about the right to vote of the little silken ladies of that land than the Burmese women know themselves; for over there they know little about votes, and care less about the affairs of government than their American sisters. But the most that such a statement conveys is that Burmese women are free,—comparatively.

The dainty damsels of the land that nestles in a corner of southern Asia seem to laugh first and last, if not all the time. They can't say the Burmese word for *laugh* (yee) without parting their lips and showing their teeth in a smile at least. Ma Burma laughs because she does not have to be only one of a number of wives of the same man, and be compelled to wear a heavy veil over her face when she goes out on the street, as do her Mohammedan sisters throughout the East. She laughs because she does not have to remain "in purdah"—always have to be hidden behind the curtains of her home prison —as is the fate of her Hindu neighbor woman in India. She laughs because hers is not the lot of hard work and bound and crippled feet of many of the women of China. She laughs because she has the opportunity to do what she likes to do most, "to buy and sell and get gain." On a continent of women slaves the liberty of

Burmese Womanhood at its Best

Burma's women shines like the rubies of their mines.

But we would not be misunderstood. There is a drawback to every blessing in any land where the religion of Jesus Christ has not purified the hearts of men. With all her freedon, the demure brown woman of Burma must walk behind her husband on the street, take all the care of the children, do much of the hard work, carry the loads on her head and the heavy burdens of the household on her heart. The girl babies are much more unwelcome than boys, and generally are not considered worth educating. With cheerful grace the sister carries around the pampered baby brother on her hip. But she can roam the roads, play to her heart's content, go to market, smile at the world, stay unmarried till she is grown, and choose a husband herself. So she laughs.

As to grace of carriage, dignity of bearing, and pride of race, the Burmese people are made of the stuff that kings are made of. They revel in color and music, show and display. They are artists, but not artisans. Not having learned how to obey, they can not command. Their strong and good traits are not of the sort that long endure in this modern workaday world, more's the pity. Should time last, their

fate would be assimilation. But should this come, those who know them best hope that their general likableness may be transmitted.

CHAPTER VI

THE WAY UP COUNTRY

THE long Up Mail stands ready in the Rangoon station for the three-hundred-eighty-mile trip to Mandalay. Under the low, smoke-blackened roof of the train-shed the light is poor, and we peer into the different compartments until we find our names written on cards placed at the head of our berths. These places have been reserved for us by request. Amid much confusion and shouting of coolies we pile in our luggage (not baggage), and with a feeling of preparedness for the worst, stroll up and down the platform to view the train incidentally, and our fellow travelers especially. Lest we seem to digress, we shall eschew comment on the latter for the present.

Some aspects of this line of cars strike a newcomer as strange indeed. To Americans the European type of engine appears peculiar. It sits low on the tracks, with square front and boxed-in sides. The tracks in Burma are narrow-gage, the rails being about three feet

apart. The cars are the usual width, and so they look top-heavy. They are of different lengths, the longest being a little shorter than the American Pullman. The longer ones have double trucks, but the shorter have single pairs of wheels, with spokes. Various types of car construction prevail. The first- and second-class carriages are divided into three or four compartments, and the third-class is all in one, generally. The cars are hooded for protection from the heat; that is, they have double tops, the upper part leaving a six-inch space between it and the lower, and reaching down the side to below the window tops. The first-class compartments are painted white on the outside, the second-class green, and the third-class light brown. Red, too, must be included in the color scheme, and so the luggage and mail compartments are adorned with crimson. Each division has its respective class number indicated by large raised letters on the side. The government officials usually have the white places to themselves, the natives crowd the brown ones, and the green is a meeting-ground for the commonwealth of all peoples.

We start for our places, when a porter clangs a hand-bell that is altogether too big for him, as a sign that in five minutes we shall be on our

The Irrawaddy River and the Boats that Ply its Waters

way. There is an extra rush as belated passengers clamber on board, a loud slamming of doors along the line, and at the expiration of the time limit the whistle toots—not a strong, healthy whistle, but an effeminate shriek—and we are off. You may walk and run along with us for a time, since there are no jerks nor fast get-aways in the land where time is not precious. We are starting at sixteen fifty o'clock, since there are not two twelves in a day, but really twenty-four hours, for the Burmese railways.

As the city fades away, we turn to inspect our compartment. It measures about eight feet wide by ten long and eight high. Along the sides, except at the doors, are cane-seated benches with springs. Passengers thus sit with their backs to the windows, unless there is plenty of room and they dare manifest enough ill manners to stretch their legs along the seat. In an endeavor to combine a bed and a seat in one, the company has made this very necessary part of comfortable traveling too narrow to sleep on and too wide to sit on. The first-class seat is convertible, so that one can face the front; but the third-class has just foot-wide boards, an extra seat in the middle of the car, and overhead "upper berths," which are in reality third-quality pantry-shelves. In our

carriage the cushioned upper berth is folded against the wall when it is not in use. Opening off the compartment is a diminutive wash- and closet-room.

Several fellow travelers share our stuffy cell. One, a Chinaman, gazes stolidly out of the window; an Indian lolls in a corner, and a cigarette, with a young Burman pulling poison from one end of it, occupies another. And there is luggage, luggage, luggage —least in importance, but greatest in bulk. Only a small amount of impedimenta may be booked (checked) free on a ticket and carried in the brake-van (baggage car), and any extra is charged for at a high rate. Consequently stern necessity tells the Oriental to take it with him into his compartment, and, within a certain limit, no one says him nay. Add to this the fact that we in the East must carry our comforts with us if we would have any. It is the custom to provide very few comforts on the trains, in the rest-houses which are used as hotels, and at the houses of friends. Rooms are furnished with no more than was Elisha's little room "on the wall" at Shunem,—a bed, table, stool, and candlestick being the sum. Bedding, toilet articles, etc., must be taken on a journey. So every traveler seems to be "shifting" with all his effects. There is no sight of the

stalwart European striding down the station platform between two suit cases; instead, he saunters along, and about ten coolies follow with his movables on their heads.

Let us take an inventory of the various articles that clutter our feet—rolls of bedding, tin trunks, boxes, a sun-hat, basket of fruit, rugs, canes, umbrellas, gun, birds in cage, food basket, bath-tub, wash-bowl and pitcher, folding table, bag of nuts, typewriter, water-jar,—but I weary you.

Shall we look from the window? Broken only here and there by a tree-crowned eminence marking a village, vast stretches of waving rice-fields extend to the bounds of the horizon. It seems incomprehensible that in this greatest of rice-growing countries every plant is stuck into the ground by hand. And what appears to be one illimitable field is in reality a countless number of little irregular patch-work puddles, many of them no larger than the space beneath a house.

The view out soon becomes monotonous, and we welcome the station stops. The train slows down with a joltless, dignified ease, and the decreasing roar is interspersed with the babel of the station furies,—coolie women crying their extreme willingness to carry luggage, and fight-

ing one another for the privilege. The train is to stop for twenty minutes for no apparent reason, and we alight to look around. Native men come swinging by with two baskets on a pole, one containing a pot of hot rice and the other various kinds of curry. A banana leaf serves as a plate and fingers for forks, and a good hearty lunch is sold to the passengers through the low train windows,—price eight cents. Here is a Burmese woman serving various tasty edibles, which she carries in a wide flat basket on her head, languidly waving a stick over them to keep the crows away. Her plaintive cry is, "Poo deh, cho deh." (It's hot, it's sweet). A flock of crows is perched on the tops of the cars, watching an opportunity to swoop for the leavings, while a horde of skinny dogs run in and out among the wheels, ready to snap for chicken bones.

A little engine is shunting wagons (switching freight-cars) on a side-track. Here is a native brakeman using a unique brake to stop his shunted wagon at the right place—a brake on which these railways seem to have an exclusive patent right. But I shall not risk divulging a trade secret when I tell you that the brake consists in the man's running along ahead of the moving wagon and putting little stones on the track to retard its progress.

At length we get started again slowly, and the tiresome journey continues. The speed limit is twenty-five miles an hour, and we make about twenty. With uncomfortable seats, close compartments, slow rate of travel, and long

The Great Gotec Bridge, Built by American Engineers

journeys, travel is not pleasant in Burma. But the speed is so much greater than the slow-moving bullock-cart that there is little complaint on the part of those who formerly knew only the snail-pace. Why be in a hurry? There is another day coming. The greater speed the

more jolting, and slowness insures safety. And while these trains are classed, by foreigners, among the things that creep, they have their advantages. They are safe, frequent, and commodious, and since they have all the time, they are rarely behind it.

The road bed is in excellent condition, the ties being of the old reliable wooden sort. The white ants would soon consume these for lunch if it were not that the frequent trains keep them trembling, and his antship does not relish shaky food. But the same preservative is not in operation with the telegraph poles and fence posts, hence they are of steel, set in cement. The former are worn-out rails and are well adapted for the purpose. Painted on each pole in plain sight of the moving cars is the number of miles from the terminus of the road, and also the number of the pole in that mile. Thus the traveler at any moment may ascertain just how many *feet* he is from his destination.

In places where cuts and fills are made along the track the earth is removed with hoe-like tools and carried in baskets on the heads of coolie women. The work is done by the piece and they are paid according to the number of cubic yards removed. In order to show how high the top of the ground was before the ex-

cavation was made, columns of earth are left standing at intervals. These are usually crowned with a tuft of grass or weeds to prove that that was really the top; and, being about a foot in diameter, they have the appearance of human beings, and are called "dead men." So it is often said that the railway is strewn on either side with dead men.

We engage in conversation, after asserting our rights to the air by insisting that the Burman shall cease to "drink his cigarette." The talk drifts to fares on the railway.

"What is the rate of fares?" I asked my companion.

"One pice (half cent) a mile third-class, three pice second-class, five pice first-class," was the answer; and he continued by way of further explanation: "You will notice that each ticket has the color of the compartment in which it grants a ride; and the amount it costs is printed on it. Usually none of the train authorities trouble you about your ticket until you pass out of the station at your destination, and many times you are not requested to show it at all."

"I should think such a method would give ample opportunity for dishonest persons to steal rides."

"It does seem so, and yet it is surprising how

few persons get free rides on these trains, considering the carelessness and grafting propensities of some of the employees."

"Are our missionaries granted special rates?"

"Yes, they get half-fares by written request to the traffic manager for each trip; or certificates lasting a month are granted. We missionaries usually travel second-class. The third-class fare is only a little less than half second-class fare, and for the difference in cost it doesn't pay to endanger our health and the reputation of our work. A person's standing is everything over here, and he is judged by the way he lives and travels. Certain standards are expected of Europeans and Americans, and if one does not live up to them (and they are reasonable) the natives lose respect for him. Also, at times, these third-class compartments are veritable pens of filth and disease. By the way, did you ever hear of 'pipe-stem traveling'?"

I confessed my ignorance of the meaning of the expression, and my friend explained: "Well, I heard the expression in Japan. You see, a Japanese pipe has a valuable bowl and mouthpiece, but these two are connected by a cheap and changeable stem. It is said that when the gentleman with the slim purse desires to make a good impression upon his friends, he buys a

first-class ticket when his journey begins, but only to the next station. At the first stop, he alights and buys a third-class ticket, and takes a lower seat until within one station of his destination, when he changes again, and is able smilingly and without 'loss of face' to greet his friends from a first-class carriage. The reason for this being called pipe-stem travel is obvious."

Meal-time suggests that there are two alternatives for the refreshment of the appetite. There are no dining cars on the trains, and so we partake of the viands supplied at the station restaurants, or resort to the tiffin basket. The latter we have brought with us, and it consists of a large (for a basket) trunk-like affair, usually crated, or in some way reinforced to withstand the wear. Now "tiffin" as a word is the sole property of Anglo-Indian circles, and comes from "tiffing," which signifies eating between meals. So tiffin is luncheon in the East, but always the luncheon between breakfast and dinner; that is, about noon or early afternoon. But a tiffin basket carries meals, of whatever name. And its fitting-up ranges all the way from the very simple to the very elaborate, according to the taste and pocket-book of the owner. It is very handy to

have an alcohol or an air-pressure oilstove in it so that water or food may be heated. Lacking this we could resort to the escape valve on the

A Traveling Restaurant

engine for hot water, if the driver (engineer) is friendly.

The food hawked along the station platforms does not appeal to the eye nor taste of those whose ideas of cleanliness and attractiveness of victuals have been cultured along the lines of Western propriety. So at the stations where we arrive about meal-times are restaurants, arranged first-, second-, and third-class, and ample time—at the rate of the East—is given for the satisfaction of the appetite.

In the old days the river Irrawaddy was the only highway to the up-country; and it was, and is yet, a broad and handy way indeed, however winding. The prows of palatial steamers and swift launches cut its yellow waters today; and a delightful round trip is made by tourists in going to Mandalay by train, and back by sliding down the devious course of the father of Burmese waters.

We leave the train to meet with transportation more primitive. A not-to-be-despised mode of travel in Burma, even in this day of electric, steam, and motor vehicles, is the lowly bullock cart. Every foreigner must come to it, if he stays here long and goes anywhere. Off the beaten track of the globe trotter, the cart roads are poor, as a rule. The English are the best

road builders in the world, it is said, and no one can complain about the ones they have built in Burma. But there are few of them in so big a country. The strictly Burmese roads are ditches. The cartmen go "the shortest way there," and the roads are never "worked." The water from the torrential rains, finding its level there as everywhere, seeks the cart tracks for channels; and in the course of years, water and wheel furrow into the ground a deeply sunken road, ever rough and bumpy, and smothered in dust in dry weather.

On such lowways it is evident that two wheels are just half the difficulty of four; hence the cart. Its bed is made square, with woven bamboo for a floor. It has picket-fence sides about a foot high. If covered, the top is of the prairie-schooner style, and is made of matting, with adjustable extra pieces to extend over front and back in case of rain. This is the common make; but there are variations for different purposes. The tongue is of two converging pieces of wood, fastened wide apart at the axle and meeting where the yoke is attached to them in front. The yoke itself is of common variety, except that the pieces which parallel the necks of the bullocks are like broom sticks. They protrude through holes in the

beam that rests on the back of the neck, and are easily removable. Across the tongue-pieces, and right between the flanks of the bullocks, being in front of the cart box proper, short boards are placed for the driver's seat.

The wheels are quite modern, although before the country was opened up they used to be huge slabs of wood. The axle is made of hard jungle wood, and the wheels are kept on by pins in its ends. I have been explicit, because the Burmese cart is a remarkable vehicle—not for looks, far from it, but for adaptability. Sometimes singly, but usually in long caravans, thousands of these simple conveyances worm through the valleys and wind over the hills, bearing the weight of Burma's load.

A few days after our arrival in the up-country, we were slumbering peacefully in the gray dawn, the only cool and sleep-producing part of the night. Dream-like and far away there came a piercing cry, like the plantive call of some wild thing in distress. Again and louder it sounded, till it penetrated sleep-dulled ears like a pain. There was a sudden sitting up in bed, a quickened heart-beat, and a whispered, "What's that?" A moment of stillness and it came again, a long-drawn-out shriek that cut the misty atmosphere like a knife. What

100 **Old Style Cart with Water Buffaloes**

horrible agony, that could project such sounds into the ghostly stillness! And yet the neighborhood was not alarmed! Now, again, and nearer! Shriek! screech! yell! scream!—shriek! screech! yell! scream! Oh, the terror of it! It stimulated action, and yet forbade it. We must do something. Crawling stealthily out from under the net and over to the window, we peered roadward into the haze. It approached, but we stuck to our post with the bravery of desperation. Then, slowly through the fog it loomed, and took shape. Our hair dropped back into its natural attitude, and we *laughed*! Nothing but a Burmese cart on the way to early market, and the driver fast asleep on his seat.

Somewhat exaggerated, says the stranger to Burma. Our fright,—perhaps so. But not the noise. It puts description to shame. For the Burman scorns to grease his cart wheels. With a heavy load and wood frictioning wood, the squeaks and squawks and squoks are never the same, but always painful—to all but the occupants of the cart. But why this affliction of the ear, we ask, with earth-oil almost as cheap as dirt. Two reasons are given. One is, that the racket drives away evil spirits; but the other, and much more practical, one is that gritty dust sticks to the grease and wears away

the wooden axle. But even at that we fail to quite see the mechanical philosophy of it; yet settle back to bear it, as something of the vexatious in Oriental life that will not be remedied.

Well, we are ready to attempt a ride. As is usual with country-going carts, at the back there is a large bag-like projection, made of bamboo strips, to provide a place for bullock food, water cans, and other impedimenta of the journey. So we are deprived of the happy privilege of letting our feet dangle out of the back end. We must crawl into the prison from the front, before the bullocks are attached. There are no elevated seats, for the Burman doesn't use any; and anyway the top is too low for them. So our comfort is found in any permissible sitting-on-the-floor attitude we may invent.

The bullocks are heavy fellows, with the usual fat-hump above the shoulders common to all Eastern draught kine. The driver—he likes to be called the "chief officer of the cart" —maneuvers his animals into place with considerable deftness, meanwhile making a kissing noise with his mouth to keep them steady and quiet, exactly the same noise we make to produce the opposite effect on a horse. The reins are

small, stout ropes, and are fastened, in lieu of a bridle, through holes in the noses of the patient beasts. Their motto is, Slow and steady. We start, or are supposed to, but it is difficult to detect the movement. The operation is something like this: The bullocks stand firmly on all fours, and at the command to go they lean frontwards against the yoke, gingerly; and as the load slowly follows, a forefoot is extended, to save them from falling forward. They keep on leaning, and the other forefoot takes its turn. A succession of such movements, slightly accelerated, makes progress. And this is their speed limit, if left to themselves. But impatient passengers and a liberal fee provide an original source of greater haste.

On the Road in a Bullock Cart

The only springs present are those between our vertebræ, and they were not made to meet this. Jolt, jiggle, tip, bump, roll; rub, rattle,

dust, heat, smells—on we go, and are worn nerve-bare in a mile.

Possibly going faster and getting the thing over would be preferable. So we suggest it. The "chief officer" protests; sore-footed bullocks, hot sun, etc., are his excuses. But at last we insist; and he rises—literally—to the occasion.

Now in *India* a driver resorts to the tails of his bullocks as accelerators. With a gutteral trill over his tongue, he reaches for a caudle appendage like changing the speed on a Ford, and gives it a vigorous twist that quickly injects pep into a jaded beast. And this is kept up during the life-time of the animal till the abused tail is sadly lifeless and disconnected in its bony structure, looking very much like the string of spools the baby pulls across the floor. Or it may be, on occasion, that the Indian cart-man tries some other way. Leaning far over the bullocks, he threateningly brandishes his whip-stick over their heads with a motion resembling that of the bow over the violin strings, the while emitting a series of shrill yelps calculated to freeze bovine blood.

But no tail-twists nor fiddle-music for the Burman. Our man grabs his reins in one hand, and his goad in the other, and jumps to his feet with a yell. Then, with every muscle

alert, he shoots out a volley of epithets over a mouth-full of *kun* juice: "Oun-n-n-g meh-leh! Nwa-dee! Thwa! Thwa! Thwa! Uh! Uh! Uh!"— which, freely translated, means, *Oh mother!* (a forceful interjection ever springing to the lips of a Burman) *Bullock!* (literally, he-cattle) *Go! Go! Go!* And the last three sounds are chesty grunts, accompanied by energetic pokes into the animal's flanks with the point of the goad.

As a surprisingly quick effect of this sudden outburst the bullocks lean forward more nearly like lightning, and "thwa." And we also "thwa." Every previous disagreeable sensation we have experienced is multiplied in intensity by ten, and a number of new ones added. Projected in every direction in rapid succession, the rebound is truly harrowing. We begin to think of resultant black and blue spots on anatomical projections, and decide to forego our speed mania for the present. We communicate this humiliating conclusion to the "chief officer," and, with the faintest of smiles, he soon brings the flying equipage to a full stop. Then, lighting a big cheroot, our Jehu calmly puffs away at it and awaits our further pleasure. We say nothing, for there is nothing adequate to the occasion that can

be said. So we emerge very much disheveled in appearance and cowed in spirit, and settle for all time that there is only one way to travel comfortably with a Burmese cart; and that is —to walk!

CHAPTER VII

OF THE BURMANS BURMESE

SOON after going to Burma, we received a letter from a small boy acquaintance in America, asking if we lived in a tree. Perhaps this idea is akin to the notion that the sun never shines in darkest Africa, or that all the vegetation in China is yellow. However, it may be our young friend did see a picture of a house in a tree, purporting to be a reflection of life in Burma. But after a number of years of living in and traveling about this land of peculiarities we did not see one house in a tree, though we heard there are some. Burmese tree-houses are just about as ordinary as American tree-houses.

But the Burman is fond of living "up in the air," at least in the low-lying parts of the country. Paddy (rice) is the most general crop, and it must be kept flooded. The ground is covered with water during the rainy season; and, even if it were possible, it would be very uncomfortable and unhealthful to live in a house

A Scene in a Jungle Village

with a dirt floor. So the people usually perch their houses high up on posts.

The typical Burmese house is made entirely of bamboo, that inestimable boon to the poor man in the tropics. Its firm structure, light weight, and straight-splitting tendency make it very valuable for building purposes. With it he makes all parts of his house, his linoleum, candlestick, drinking cup, savings bank, cow-bell, wrapping paper, horoscope, water pipe, furniture, baskets, handles for tools, and a hundred other articles too common to mention. I judge the least use he makes of it is for fishing poles.

The primitive and only tool needed for the building is the *dah*, a long knife just about the size and shape of a straight corn-cutting knife. It is also the general weapon. It is wonderful in how many ways the Burman can use it. A skilled jungle man in the olden days could go into the forest with nothing but a *dah*, and emerge in a day or two with a complete and well-made bullock cart.

In a house large enough to have two stories, the upper one is never above the lower, but is placed at the back, so that the two are like steps. If he can help it, no Burman will live or sleep beneath the room in which another

lives or sleeps. When we started our school we did not have room enough in the dormitory; and in my ignorance I suggested that we make "double-decker" beds. We were warned before it was too late.

Below the upper, or back, story of the house is the stable for the bullocks and carts. The floor of the bedroom above it is made of split bamboo, and has cracks about an inch wide. So the air in the sleeping apartments can not be very wholesome; and it would be almost unbearable if the walls were not made of bamboo matting and the windows kept open so that the breeze can have free course.

The roof is usually made of short pieces of stripped bamboo, which are lapped like shingles. From within, it is possible to study the heavenly bodies through the roof; but it is surprising how little of even the heaviest rain comes through, when once the wood is wet.

Every year a careful house owner daubs the walls and posts of his house with a coat of crude petroleum, and this preserves the light material for several years. The average life of the roof and walls is five years, when they must be entirely renewed.

There is a little corner or room at one side of the front of the house which is set aside as a

cooking place. The "stove" is a low, wide box filled with earth. On it are large stones on which the cooking utensils are placed, and among which the fire is built. The rice is cooked in an earthen pot; but the most common utensil is a large, shallow iron bowl in which many foods are boiled in grease. The Burman is very fond of fatty foods.

Beds are usually made up on the floor, but some have a low wooden bed with bamboo strips for springs. A double mat or thin mattress is placed on top of the bamboo strips. The pillow is round and high and hard. There are no chairs, and a mat on the floor or a low platform serves as a table.

Except in the larger towns, where there are sanitary laws rigidly enforced, all refuse and foul matter is let drop through the floor of the house, or dumped into the yard or street. It is no trouble at all to do the sweeping. During the rainy season the water is usually a foot or more deep beneath the house, and all wastes go into that. One can easily imagine the mess that is presented at the subsidence of the stagnant water. If it were not for the animal and insect scavengers, conditions would be indeed deplorable. But chickens, ducks, crows, vultures, dogs, pigs, and ants attack the waste,

and thus save the lives of the people from many epidemics. Is it any wonder that these filth consumers have the freedom of the house and are never killed?

In such a house, and under such conditions, little Burmese boys and girls come into the world. And yet their early years are happy ones. They are named according to the day of the week on which they were born, to this extent: with each day of the week go certain letters of the Burmese alphabet, and the initial letter of the child's name must be one of the letters which go with his day. There are no family names, and it is difficult to distinguish members of the same family by any similiarity of names. But at times there is an intentional likeness in sounds, as witness the following four names of boys in the same family: Maung Thaw, Po Kaw, Po Pyaw, Ba Kyaw.

As may be seen from these four, the names are usually composed of two monosyllabic words. Much more so than in English they are taken from the common nouns of the language. In our language we have the family names, Black, Gardener, House, Rose, Kitchen, etc., all of which are in ordinary use as common nouns. In Burma practically all of the names are of this sort; and many of them are such grotesque

combinations that they sound very strange to us. They might be anything from Beautiful Love, Golden Rice, and Fragrant Flower, to Hot Needle, Cross Wife, and Cocoanut Oil. Maung is the common word for Mr., and Ma for Miss or Mrs. Sometimes, because of his small size as a baby, a boy will be given the name Little Mister (Maung Ngae) or some other name to indicate a tiny body; and then he will grow up to be quite a large man, and will be ashamed to be called little. So he has the privilege of changing his name to Big Mister (Maung Gyi).

While women and girls are not looked down upon in Burma as in many other countries of the East, yet boys are more desirable, and the Burman "lets the women do the work" more than Westerners like to see. The husband precedes his wife on the street, and she carries the bundles. Only boys are thought to be worth educating. But in babyhood both boys and girls are treated much the same.

Among the first lessons the little ones must learn are getting used to the hot sun and enjoying a cold bath. Not for them the thick sun-helmet of the European, so they crawl about bareheaded, meanwhile developing a thick crop of coarse, black hair. Almost white at birth,

The Boys Find Delightful Climbing Places among Old Shrines

mother does not scruple to expose the tiny bare body to the mid-day sun for a time each

day to accustom it to the glare and actinic rays. So it isn't long till babies might be likened to roasted coffee beans.

With most Burmans the daily bath is a joy; and they keep their bodies and clothes scrupulously clean. Still, few babies are naturally aquatic, and they must be taught to like the water. It is a common sight to see a mother with her diminutive charge at the bath. At a certain time in the morning she takes the little one, perhaps not able to sit up alone yet, sets it on a stone at the front steps, and pours water over its little body by the pail full. Of course the operation is accompanied by lusty howls from the victim, punctuated by blubbers; but the motto in this regard is, Spare the water and spoil the child; so the unfeeling parent is unconcerned. Consequently the babe soon learns to laugh and crow all through the deluge; and if there is a stream or pond near his home, he grows up to take to water like a duck.

Both sexes run around absolutely naked till they are five or six years old. The little girls are given the task of taking care of their little brothers, even when that same little brother is nearly as big as his big sister. And so, as the little governess plays with the neighbor girls she will carry baby brother astride her hip,

holding him on with one arm and playing with the other. I have seen some lazy brothers carried this way when they were so big that their feet almost touched the ground. This would give every little Burmese girl curvature of the spine, were it not that when she is tired of him on one hip she deftly switches him over to the other "on the fly." And then, too, girls and women carry their burdens on their heads, and this gives them an erect carriage; while the men never do, and so have round shoulders. The straddle of mother's or sister's hip while children makes the Burmese adult walk with a spraddle that is far from elegant.

When little Maung or Ma put on clothes each dresses just exactly as father or mother does, and incidentally tries to imitate the parent in dress effects. Their head gear is different however. They wear nothing to correspond to hats yet; but the boy lets his hair grow long, and it is tied around with a string tight to his head, the ends dangling out behind like the tops of a bunch of green vegetables. The little girl either follows his style or may do hers up in a little knot on top.

About the time the boy begins to emerge from babyhood to boyhood, he is sent to the *kyaung*, or monastic school. The *kyaungs* are

usually located in a secluded part of the village or town, and are surrounded by a court inclosed with a cactus hedge or tall fence. The priests are of all ages, and live together. They carry umbrellas or large palm-leaf fans to protect themselves from the sun, and are given to betel-nut chewing, expectorating the red juice in every direction.

The *kyaung* serves as a primary boarding school, the priests taking full charge of the youngsters. During the two years they remain, the little fellows act as servants to the priests, carrying water, cooking food, and attending them on their journeys, for a priest must not carry a burden. They do not don the yellow robe during these two years, but their heads are shaved. They are compelled to attend school for some time each day, and are taught the forms and prayers of the Buddhist religion, and incidentally to read, write, spell, and figure. Thus every male Burman is able to read and write, a great advantage these people have over the other peoples of the East. Practically all of their mental work is memorizing, the priests having whole books by heart.

While the boys are attending this school their lot is not hard. After duties are done they have their fun as all boys do the world around.

Usually the food is good, having been begged from door to door from a liberal people who are glad to get merit by feeding the priests. When the time is up the boys may return home, as

The Boys Attend the Priests and Learn their Lessons at the Kyaung

most of them do; or they may remain and after ten years become priests and live an easy and meditative life. The priest must forego the joys of home and family, but he has a part in much of the pleasures of his people, since all good times are had in the name of religion.

Meanwhile the little girl is helping mother

at home. In the early dawn she is up to help pound the husk off the rice for the day's food. She learns just how to cook the rice in the little earthen pot set on three stones with the fire between. She acquires the art of putting the right ingredients and the right amount of each into the curry to make it tasty, which is a culinary accomplishment not easily acquired. As soon as the meal is cooked she dashes water on the remaining half-burned sticks of wood, with a fuel economy born of necessity.

The man of the house has been at work in the fields while mother and daughter have gone to the market to buy food for the day; and breakfast is not eaten till about ten o'clock, although when first getting up they often eat a light lunch and drink some hot tea. The family surround a clean mat spread on the floor or on the ground under the house, and the rice and curry pots are placed in the center. Each person has a large enamel plate or banana leaf, a small bowl, and, if the curry is watery, a crude spoon. The plates are heaped high from the central receptacle with the use of a half cocoanut shell or the bare hand. The eating proceedure is without ceremony, and consists of first mixing a little curry with a little rice at the base of the mountain of that article on the plate,

taking a surprisingly large wad of the mixture between the thumb and the first two fingers, then switching the mouthful onto the fingers with the thumb just back of it, and finally quickly shooting the whole into the mouth with a flip of the thumb. This is the main article of diet, and gives the name to all meals—curry-and-rice, that's a meal. It may be topped off, among the better classes or on special occasions, with other viands; but curry and rice provide the staples. The food is eaten very rapidly, and there might be more indigestion if the rice were not easily digested and the curry stimulating.

After breakfast, the father lies down for a snooze till about three o'clock in the afternoon, a wise custom in such a hot climate. Then if he is industrious, as industry goes in Burma, or if necessity demands, he works till sundown. The heaviest meal of the day is taken in the evening.

Meanwhile, a very important part of the day's program is performed by the mother and small children. They take the midday nap, too, but not before the noontide wash and bath. First, the mistress gathers together the paraphernalia for the operation. Under one arm she carries the daily wash, consisting perhaps

of three or four garments. In her hand she grasps a stick about the size and shape of half a broom handle. She takes an old strip of cloth, wraps it round and round itself into a circle till it looks like a doughnut, and places it on her head. This forms a nest for the roundbottomed water jar, and protects her head as she carries it. As nearly as they can the children equip themselves like the mother; and then all set off for the washing place, the little ones bearing their small jars on their heads as jauntily as they would wear hats.

Every neighborhood has a place to wash body and clothing. It may be a stream or a lake. Often it is an open well, perhaps without a curb to keep the foul water from draining back in. The first house we lived in at Meiktila was on the shore of Meiktila Lake, the water of which is used by natives and Europeans for drinking and all other purposes, there being no wells.

I will describe the scene we witnessed every noon on the shore of this lake. Be it understood that the civil authorities use every legitimate means to keep this water pure. No sewage is supposed to go into it, and bathing in it is prohibited.

Our Burmese mother and her two little girls

approach the bank and join the group already there. Near the water's edge are several flat stones and slabs of wood. She fills her water pot at the lake and squats down with it by a stone—her washboard, if you please. Her soiled *longee* (skirt) is extracted from the bundle, and thoroughly wetted and soaped. It is then placed in a wad on the stone and vigorously hammered with the stick. This primitive washing machine works on the same principle as the up-to-date, electrically-run affairs, and when the method is energetically and patiently applied it does the work as thoroughly. The soapy water is forced through the cloth and removes the dirt. When the garment is well cleansed and rinsed she spreads it out on the grass, and the beating sunshine does more than a drying work upon it. The girls imitate the mother and operate on their own little garments, but usually the mother has to finish the work they start.

The other garments are washed in due course, and then she takes her bath. Unfastening her sack-like *longee* at the waist, she fastens the top of it above her breasts, the bottom reaching to her knees. Then her light coat is removed and she is ready for the water. Filling the water pot, and grasping the top of it firmly with both hands, she suddenly

raises it and turns it up-side-down over her head—a shower bath de luxe! If she would have it run slowly she fits the mouth of it more tightly on her head, and the water trickles down.

When well soaked in this way, she applies the soap; and does it by simply inserting one arm and hand inside the cloth bathroom formed by her *longee*, and holding the top of the *longee* tightly about her shoulders with the other hand. When this is finished she rinses off the soap by the shower method, gathers up the recently washed and now dry *longee* from the grass, slips it over her head and down over the wet one, and, while holding the dry one in place, unfastens the wet from beneath and lets it drop to her feet. She then adjusts the dry, steps out of the wet, and stands forth clean, having performed her ablutions in public with all decency and womanly modesty.

Next, the garment she has used as a bathroom is washed, and while it is drying she sits on her heels, puffs at a big cigar, and gossips with her fellow washers. The little ones have gravitated to the water, in spite of the prohibiting sign, and now sport in high glee. What matters if some can not swim? They turn their water pots up-side-down in the water, and the captive

air makes of them excellent floats. Also, they form airbags for the same purpose by taking off their soaked and almost air-tight *longees*, fixing them like a sack, and with a quick movement filling them with air and plunging their openings under the water. Poverty is the father of invention.

The frolic and gossip over, the whole company step into the lake a few feet, right where the washing has been going on and all the dirty water has drained back in, and fill their jars to be carried back home for drinking and cooking purposes. In fact, the average Burman, if he thinks about it at all, seems to work on the theory that water is water, and in some way purifies itself. Anyway, if it looks fairly clean it is all right. While such things are not common, we have seen a man wade down into a pond in the dry season, push away the green scum on the water from the place where he stood, wash his feet and legs, cleanse his mouth and teeth, and then fill his cans with drinking water from exactly the same spot. One wonders how they manage to live through such practises. The truth is, in many cases they do not. As to those who do manage to live their alloted time, shall we say for them that the germ theory does not work in Burma; or is the following

explanation more satisfactory? By the diseases which result from unsanitary conditions, such as plague and cholera, very large numbers are taken off every year. But many always escape, because of an unusually good physique or other favorable conditions; and in thus being able to hold the germs at bay they build up a degree of immunity to these diseases, which immunity is passed on to succeeding generations. For it does seem true, as someone has said, that there are those of the natives of the East who "could swallow a spoonful of plague germs and not get the plague." Yet one of them, if he came to America, might very easily die of the measles.

To return to the day's routine; after the customary napping time in the hot hours, the waning period of light is spent as far as possible in taking it easy till evening meal time. Games that must be played by daylight are indulged in by the youth. But this recreation hour, and more especially the joy-time that comes after the evening meal, are so different from the humdrum of the Burmese day that they deserve special treatment in the chapter on play time.

When our Burmese boy reaches the years of adolescence he must take on man's estate, which

he does outwardly by being tattooed, and by donning a bright-colored band of silk cloth around his head. Of course, at this period, like youth the world over, his fancy runs to vari-colored clothes of the flashy type.

The tattooing ordeal is an event and a turning point in his young life, for the way he bears it has much to do with his rating among his fellows. He is now a man, and, if he values his reputation, not a whimper escapes him during the painful operation.

His sister, too, sees a change in her status in her early teens. Her confirmation for the rating of a woman is shown by having her ears bored for ear-rings. The ceremony is made a gala occasion. Relatives and friends gather as to a festival, and there is much music and eating and a general good time. However, this follows the ceremony. An adept at ear-boring is secured, and the company make merry as he pierces the victim's ear lobes. This is to attract the attention of the little sufferer from her pain.

As the sores heal the holes are kept open and made larger by inserting grass-blades and wooden pegs in them, and occasionally twisting the insertions. The usual order is to continue to enlarge the openings until they are half an

inch in diameter. In the meantime appropriate ornaments are worn in the ears,—also weights, which help to enlarge the holes. We have often seen women use these holes for cigar carriers. Some of the hill tribes extend the lobes till they are mere ribbons of flesh reaching to the shoulders, with holes so large that a man's arm could be run through them.

When Ma Burma has passed the ear-boring crisis her hair is bobbed on a level with her ear lobes, and this is a sign that she is eligible for marriage. Before long she will perhaps work (or play) at selling silks in the bazaar. The silk bazaar is the place above all places in Burma for the beginning of romance. Here she makes eyes at Maung Burma, who at this time has a surprising interest in silks.

The courting is all very decorously done, however, and the two are never seen alone together. They have the heart-beats that make the whole world kin; but the manner of approach is quite different and altogether admirable in many ways. His evening call on her is characteristic.

About nine o'clock young Maung sallies forth with a boon companion, who is on the same quest after his own particular lady. One of the two will perhaps play a flute as they go along together, and the other yells a love song at the

top of his voice. The ditty seems to have neither rhyme nor rhythm, time nor tune. No matter if the neighbors hear, and are made aware of what is going on. Why should youth be ashamed?

The serenade continues till her home is reached and maybe for a while in front of it. Then, the accompanist remains in the street while the chief actor proceeds up the steps to the little veranda. The demure miss has dressed herself in her best array for the occasion, and now sits waiting for her caller. Her finest silk clothing is in display, her dark hair well oiled and bedecked with combs and sweet scented little white flowers, and her face—well, it is ghostly. Burmese women use a sort of creamy paste on their faces to bleach the skin whiter, and it does have a very marked effect. Still, our love-lorn maiden often does not get the degree of whiteness she desires, and so leaves some of the paste on her skin. It makes her ashy pale, but she deems it beauty. The layer of paste hardens, and if she moves her features it will crack and fall off; so she sits very stiffly, and her expressionless countenance resembles that of the image at the village pagoda.

Her admirer keeps his distance, for her parents are somewhere within hearing or sight, and it is

A Posed Courtship

very improper for him to be too familiar. But they talk and laugh, he doing most of it, for she is shy; and, too, she must be careful not to crack her cosmetic.

When they have had their visit out, the attentive swain rejoins his fellow, and together they go to visit the latter's young lady. While the procedure I have described is not by any means always followed in every detail, yet it is a picture of a custom that prevails among the best families. When marriage is settled upon, the parents' consent is obtained and the dowry arranged. The nuptial ceremony is held at the bride's home, and the bridegroom pays the expenses of the feast and the presents; for presents are given, not received, by the principals at a wedding. It could not be said that the marriage is solemnized, for it is strictly a social event, not civil nor religious. No priests are present.

In the old days the bride and bridegroom are said to have fed each other with a little rice and to have given each other a drink of tea; and that constituted the essential part of the uniting of the two. But now even that custom is not followed, and the union is cemented by the festivities and the general consent of all concerned.

The youthful couple launch out on married life by remaining a few years in the harbor of the wife's parental home. And this is a safe course, since marriage is entered into very commonly when the boy is seventeen or eighteen and the girl fifteen or even younger. But when he is able to support a separate home they break away, and only then attain real maturity.

CHAPTER VIII

THE LURE IN THE GOSPEL NET

I WAS comfortably settled in a second-class compartment on the evening train north out of Rangoon. Hoping that I would not have many fellow-passengers to crowd me, at least not boresome ones, I spent the spare time looking out of the windows at the prospective travelers. In the last five minutes before the departure of the train, a friendly-looking foreigner piled into my snugness with all the numerous traps of a moving European bent on a long journey.

He dropped into his seat as the train pulled out, and we passed the time of day.

"How long since you came from America?" he asked.

Now I had been in the country just three months, but I wasn't telling anyone about it.

"What makes you think I came from America?" I parried, in my ignorance.

He laughed good-naturedly. "I knew it as soon as you opened your mouth," he said.

And right there I began to learn that an experienced traveler can tell very much about a man by how he talks, as well as by what he says. We were soon conversing pleasantly, and he told me that he was a missionary of a society doing a large work in Burma. In turn, I told him my connections, and, as we became better acquainted, of the work I was attempting.

"An industrial school to teach the Burmans how to work!" he ejaculated. "Well, I hope you succeed, for the country badly needs such institutions; but I fear for your success. Let me tell you about our experience; and, by the way, there is an interesting little tale connected with it."

I smiled my appreciation of any former experience in technical education in Burma, for I had heard that there hadn't been any, outside of jails and reformatories. So I settled myself a little more comfortably on an uncomfortable seat, and he began. In substance this is what he told me:

"Several years ago there were two young Germans, brothers, connected with a large shipping firm with headquarters at Hamburg. One of the young men was sent to Bombay to act as agent for the firm at that Indian port. The other remained in Hamburg. The young fellow in

India took in the sights at off hours, and observed that thousands of little idol gods were sold in the native shops to Hindu worshipers. These were fashioned in a crude way by the hands of native workmen. He conceived the bold idea of having a large number of these images "made in Germany" by special process and shipped in quantities to India to under-sell the local idol market. That's what I call business instinct gone to seed.

"He communicated the scheme to his brother in Hamburg, and between them they procured capital and started a wholesale idol manufactory. The first shipment was large, and started safely on its way. And just about that time the Bombay brother happened into a watch-meeting one night in the city, and was converted.

"In the midst of his new-found joy he suddenly thought of the connection between that idol business and the profession of a Christian. He decided that the only consistent thing to do was to turn down the whole proposition immediately. He hastily cabled to Hamburg to stop the shipment. But it was too late. Then he wired to his brother that he could not go on with the business, and would not receive the shipment. The brother pleaded, threatened,

and stormed in vain. The idols were dumped on the wharf at Bombay, and I don't know what ever became of them.

"But we were concerned about what became

The Burmese are Good Hands at Weaving and Make Excellent Silk Cloth

of the young man. He made up his mind to stay in the country and join our mission force. He was well suited for industrial school work, so he was encouraged with good backing to start one here in Burma. He planned a farm-school, with other industries to follow. Possessed of ingenuity and plodding energy, he soon had things in fine shape,—good land, water

piped to all parts of it, and other improvements. His whole scheme was something like yours, —but he failed."

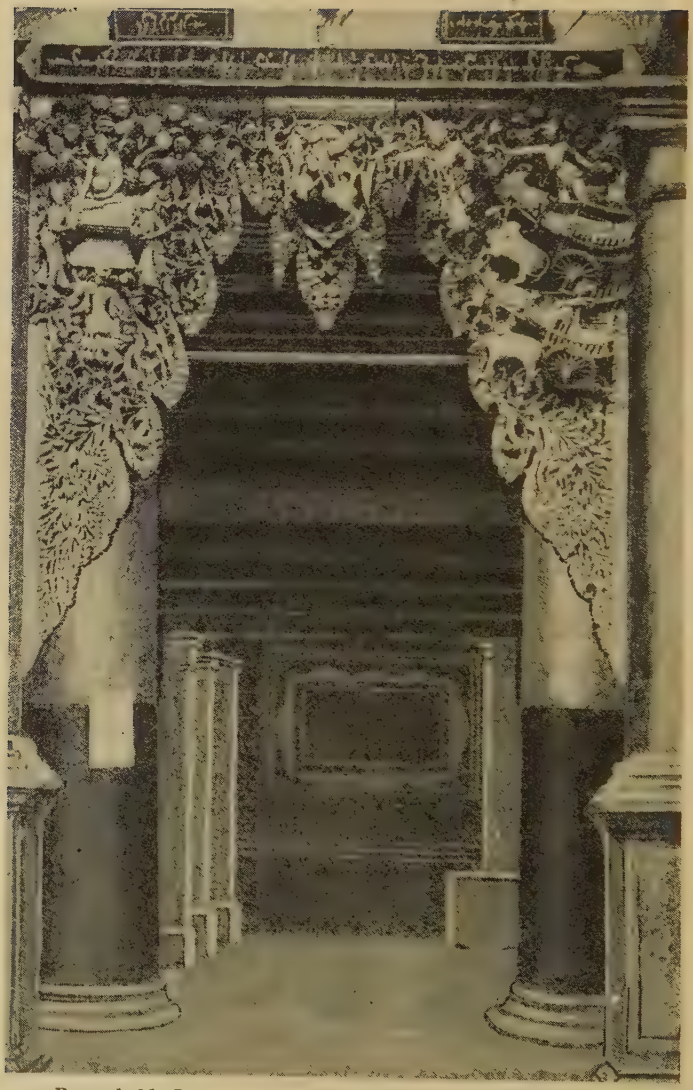
"Why?" I asked.

"Well, he had to give it up, mainly because the Burman does not take kindly to work with his hands. He does not connect school with work at all. To him an education is a means to escape work. Some think the government has encouraged this view of the matter by giving a good clerical job to every Burman who can use his head. But, in the nature of the case, all over the East there is a great demand for intellectual ability. The schooled Burman becomes a *sa yay gyi*,—a chief writer. The great majority of the people don't see the need of industrial education; and those who do are perfectly willing that it shall be given to the other man's boy. It will go hard with anyone who starts something along the line you plan. The societies who have worked here for scores of years have given it up till the country as a whole makes much greater progress toward civilized conditions."

With this, my companion turned to speak with another passenger who had boarded the train, and I was left to my own thoughts. They were not comforting. I was crushed, and did

not care to talk. To this day I do not believe that he was trying to discourage me, but he felt that I ought to know the truth as he saw it, and as experience taught.

The train roared on through the wide-stretching fields, white under the moon, and as I lay there and looked out into the hazy tropical night, memories of the past three months rushed over me like a flood. We had left home with our two little ones with the highest of hopes. From the time that we broke up till we were ready to settle down at our station in Burma, six months of wearisome journeying and long delays had passed. We had been anxious to fit into our new home, and begin work. The only available house was a little one which we had to rent, in the native part of the town. It had an iron roof, which the sun turned into the top of a stove. It was unclean, inhabited by roaches, mice, lizards, and other unpleasant hosts. The surroundings were unsanitary, and swarmed with pariah dogs, crows, and dirty children. The smells were sickening. When Mrs. Thurber first stepped up to the door of our abode-to-be and looked in, she said nothing. But in a moment she leaned against the door-post and burst into tears—just like a woman. And, just like a man, I wanted to follow her example but didn't dare.



Remarkably Intricate Wood Carvings Executed by Burmans

Then, just when I had gotten a good start on the language, which I was told must be gotten in the main the first year or not at all, we were told that we must start the school right away, or no more money could be solicited. However that was, money had ceased to come in on the fund. And more, the native custodian of the money already gathered had dipped his hand into the bag and "borrowed" a large share of the cash in hand. There was no help available from the mission then; and so we had about $150 with which to build an institution.

And then this. We were planning to make the industries the attractive feature of the school. We knew that the boys would not be drawn by the truths of Christianity; not at first. But the trades were to be the lure in the gospel net. We deceived no one, nor expected to do so; for the natives generally know what the chief purpose of the missionary is. We would do just as we agreed, teach trades thoroughly, and force no one to accept our views. Yet we would all the time hope and pray and work to the end that some boys would see in passing the greater good of the heart education that Christianity affords.

But if our attraction wouldn't attract, what then? We could not hope to compete success-

fully with the schools already established, which gave attention to intellectual education alone.

So in this our land of promise, cities of hopelessness were being built, walled up to heaven, and peopled with giants. And we, poor, insignificant Calebs and Joshuas, were presuming to hope that they could be subdued.

Right there on the train that night was fought the battle and was won the victory that for me had everything to do with our future work. But I did not fight it alone. I merely accepted the victory that was gained for me by One long ago. I found that I was not discouraged, only discomfited for a while. And it is hoped that the reader will draw the right conclusion from this recital; and that is, that every worker for God has such experiences time and again, when the emotions overtop the faith and hope for a little period, after which the will to do and dare for God emerges with a baptism of strength that knows no defeat.

We brushed away our tears; for this was only one side of things as they were. There were many compensating joys: the new sights to see, a genial people to get acquainted with, a language to conquer, a consciousness that we were greatly needed, a vision to materialize,

abundance of hard work to help forget, and above all, souls to see accept Christ.

The obvious first thing was to start something to prove that we meant to make good. So we rented a large room in an old brick building that had stood vacant for some time, and opened school. David Hpo Hla and Maung Ba Tin, two of our Burmese workers, came up from Lower Burma to teach in the vernacular. We bought some old benches, a table or two; and a washstand served as a teacher's desk. Some boys sat on the floor at first, but it was largely plaster and dirt, and good school work can not be done on the floor.

Carpentry was the first trade taught, for several reasons: I had had some experience in woodworking, we needed school furniture right away, and of the practical trades the Burman has the least objection to it. He has a natural ability in wood-carving. We early saw that it would not be wise to introduce any modern complicated tools or machinery; for we wanted to teach them just as they would have to do when they left us. The Chinese are the best carpenters and cabinet makers in the country; so we hired an old Chinese carpenter to let the boys look at him work while he made some school desks for us. But he couldn't make a

desk without a pattern, and a picture wouldn't do. A drawn plan he couldn't get into his head at all. So I went to work and made a seat group for an example, and after that he did quite well.

A Corner of One of our First School Rooms with our Home-Made Desks

About twenty boys attended at the start; and soon this number was increased to thirty. They were a playful lot, ranging from eight years up to twenty-five, and in education they varied all the way through the common school grades.

Thus far, all well and good; but we could

not continue long at that rate. There was another school in the town conducted by another society; and it was large and well located and equipped. We did not wish to antagonize it in its line of book education and training for government service. Our line was industrial combined with intellectual. But as soon as all the school furniture we could afford was completed, we had no more use for the Chinese carpenter, for two reasons: first, he couldn't teach because he was cranky, and had no idea of teaching principles; and he wouldn't make an effort to teach because if the boys learned to do as well as he did, he would have less chance to get work in an overstocked labor market. Second, the very small tuition charge that we were able to make would not pay his wage, and we were not making any product that we could sell.

Finally, all our difficulties resolved themselves into the one of procuring money to buy land, build workshops and equip them, and pay teachers; that is, to get a fair start at such a program, so that something could be manufactured that would make the trades largely self-supporting. It was unheard-of to raise any large amount of money for Christian schools from among the natives of Burma. Yet as we

prayed and worked, the thought pressed in upon us that we should do something right there to get the necessary money.

So the day came when, with not any more faith than we needed, we started our big drive; or, since the East can't be driven, perhaps we had better call it a big push. Our good brother A. W. Steevens, the government prosecutor, was an excellent standby, and gave valiant aid. Small amounts were raised in various ways, but it was felt that the most promising sources of supply would be among the merchants of Rangoon and in the oil fields of the Irrawaddy; the first, because the business men sensed the need of the country more than others, and the second because it was a prosperous section where there were many warm, liberal American hearts. Brethren Votaw and Steevens solicited the business men in the city and met with good success. The money did not come in large amounts, but it must be remembered that they were soliciting non-Christian men who were not at all supposed to be favorable to Christian missions. Our hearts bounded with joy when we heard that one wealthy Chinese wholesale merchant had given 1,000 rupees ($320).

Then we were ready for the oil country. Brother Votaw and I were to make the attack,

and we were determined to make it a success. The trip was not without attractive features, as may be understood from a description of the situation.

The First Happy School Family

Aside from the work of the American missionaries, oil-well drilling might be called the American occupation of Burma. It seems strange, yet it is said to be true, that in every oil field of the world men from the United States superintend the drilling. Mechanics of other nationalities can not or will not learn the business. It is the only trade that I have ever heard of that all other peoples concede is not in

their line. Hundreds of drillers are brought half-way around the world at great expense, are paid large salaries, and are given special concessions, as an absolute necessity to the draining of petroleum from Burma's subterranean treasure houses.

Standard Oil has invaded Burma, as everywhere, but only in the shape of the innocent-looking five-gallon can. It is the best oil sold in the country, and is indispensable for good lamplight, but of course it is most expensive. This mighty miracle of dread American trusts is looked at askance by English capitalists; and every time a tentacle of the great octopus feels for a hold in British territory, it is promptly cut or circumscribed. So English capital works and controls this field.

The center of interest is on the bank of the Irrawaddy at Yenangyaung, about halfway up toward Mandalay. There are less-paying localities on both sides of the river for many miles up and down, but "Bad-smelling-water Creek" (the meaning of the Burmese name) is the part which is especially well-oiled and oil-welled. The field is somewhat off the beaten path, and so the world tourists miss it. There isn't even a railway, and we approach from the south on the broad back of the river. Huge

red tanks dotting the hills first greet the view; and then there comes into the range of vision what at first appears to be a forest of tall, bare trees back among the hills. These soon resolve themselves into derricks, so numerous and close together that they seem to touch one another at the bases. Our little launch edges up to the bank at the best landing, and we are soon bumping along in our bullock-cart conveyance by the pumping stations. On dry, bare bluffs overlooking the river are perched the well-kept and roomy bungalows of the officers of the various companies.

A few miles more, and we are in the midst of a lively scene. Many of the readers of this know too well, perhaps, the sights and sounds and odors of an oil region. I will not, therefore, attempt to describe the features common to all fields; but some of the characteristic aspects will take your attention.

This particular field is most remarkable because it is so small and yet so inexhaustible. Within an area no larger than that occupied by an ordinary village, there are hundreds of wells so close together that there is scarcely room to work them. A circle with a radius of twenty-one feet is all that can be gotten for one site. The sites of the rival companies are

all intermingled, and many wells tap the territory of others. This causes much interchange of oil below—and words above—the surface before the matter is settled.

There is much ingenuity displayed by the field superintendents in getting first chance and best advantage in drawing away oil from adjacent territory. But this rivalry sometimes works to the disadvantage of all concerned, as the following will illustrate. One of the drillers told us that as usual one day he pumped some water into his well so that he could draw up in solution the sediment that had accumulated by the drilling; but as fast as it was pumped in, the water ran off into the oil sand. This makes no small trouble when working with heavy tools at a distance of two thousand feet down, and he bothered with it for two or three days before he discovered what was the matter. Then he happened to be talking to a neighboring driller, who said in the course of the conversation, "I don't know what is the matter with my well. I struck water day before yesterday, and have been pumping it out ever since, but there is no end to it." One was pumping the same water out that the other was pumping in.

The government controls the depth to which the drills shall go. When one oil-sand is ex-

hausted, permission is given to go deeper, and there is a race to penetrate the next stratum. And there is always oil below. This has been going on for a period of over thirty years, and millions of barrels of oil have been drawn from this one locality; yet still "gushers" are common.

Working Oil Wells in the Old Way

Yenangyaung was worked for many years before modern machinery was used. In the olden time the Burmans dug shallow wells, and with bucket and rope drew up the product. Even now a few of the old wells are being worked, right in among the towering derricks and amid the chugging of many steam pumps. These primitive wells are now about four hundred

feet deep, and about the width of an ordinary water well. A man is let down by a rope, and he fills the receptacle, which is drawn to the surface by a number of Burmese men and women pulling the rope to a certain distance from the mouth of the well and coming back by turns to get a new hold. Oil obtained in this way is usually sold to the large companies at about one dollar a barrel.

Each American driller has a number of natives to do the work while he directs it. Many of these Burmese mechanics can manage the drilling alone when all goes well, but none seem to learn judgment for an emergency. Accidents are common, and are costly if not met by expert knowledge.

Here are Americans who have seen the world—hardy "boys" who have made the rounds of Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, Texas, and California, who have "fished" for tools in the wells of Roumania and Russia, heard the bullets whistle in the anti-Armenian riots in Batum, and drilled for water on the arid plains of west Australia. They are stalwart men; rather rough, as drillers go, but withal good-hearted. The work and the region do not supply much that would soften character. They work on a three-year contract that pro-

The Temporary Work Shop, with the Boys all Ready for Work

vides that they must not bring wives with them. A few wives of higher-wage men are there, but few women can live there and be satisfied, for there is little to attract.

Set down in that bleak place and compelled to pay close attention to business, with only five days in a year vacation, in the face of every temptation and vice that the Orient can bring to bear, the men do not find conditions conducive to straight living. No missionary organization is working among them. In spite of their independence and bravado they are "as sheep without a shepherd." There is about the place an atmosphere of no-one-knows-nor-cares, and many a man goes bad and never reaches home again.

But there is a brighter side. The minimum wage is one hundred and fifty dollars a month, and each man has half a large bungalow, rent free. They have a "messing allowance," which enables many to save their whole salaries. Each man has a pony, and they frequently get out for a short hunt in the jungle. They have subscribed for and built a pleasant club-house, where there is plenty of reading and entertainment provided. Some of the men who have been ambitious and have been careful of their habits and health have risen to better

positions, and are able, after being in the field for fifteen years, to retire on a comfortable income.

We found nearly every man we met hospitable and generous to a fault. Most of them are glad to give to any mission enterprise. In the course of several visits among them we received from their liberality a large part of the fund we were raising.

All together over seven thousand rupees were donated in Burma for the school. As soon as the first money was in hand we bought 25 acres of second-class land just outside the town of Meiktila. It was in small pieces and belonged to nine different owners. Within a few days after the purchase, our Chinese carpenter was beginning the creation of a temporary workshop. We could not "hustle the East," and the work of building went forward at a snail's pace. "Labor troubles" that Europe and America never know caused tedious delays. But at last, two years after we arrived, the first building was ready for use. It was built of teak wood, the best in the country, with a cement floor, red tile roof, and substantial bamboo matting for walls; and it measured thirty-two by seventy-two feet.

It wasn't a pretentious affair, not very

The First School Building

beautiful, but to us it meant achievement. Our vision had taken shape materially, though the battle of principles was yet to come. Our boys had taken hold nobly, and had disappointed prophecies of their being too lazy to work. When *saya gyi* ("chief teacher"—the missionary) said, "Come on, boys," they came; and "coolie work" was no disgrace.

The holiday on which we moved out of the hot, close, dirty, smelly town schoolroom to our new quarters on the fresh-air hill rising gently above Meiktila Lake, was a red-letter day. We celebrated with a house-cooling, not a house-warming.

CHAPTER IX

THE TONGUE AND THE SCRIPT

THE missionary who tries to get the heart of a heathen without first getting his tongue, ends by getting his shoulder—and that cold. The natives of Burma are just about as much impressed by the message of a foreigner speaking in his own tongue as we would be if an Arab should visit America and jabber at us Mohammedan prayers in the speech of the desert, or try to convert us to belief in the Koran scriptures by speaking through an interpreter. The languages of eastern Asia present an appalling obstacle to the propagation of the gospel by Occidental peoples.

When one first comes into contact with the people he is impressed by the glaring and ludicrous mistakes of the native when trying to express himself in English. We laughed heartily and knowingly at the blunders they made, and failed utterly to temper our glee with the thought that our cumbersome attempts at the Burmesė would be far more laughable to them. They laughed last.

In passing, it is well to know that the missionary must get the laughing habit, if he hasn't it already. Not indulgence in the frivolous giggling of the sentimentalist, nor in the forced laugh of the maker of jokes; but the really funny things in life do not come too often for our good, and when they do it is well to give way to a diaphragm-shaking laugh. If anywhere "a merry heart doeth good like a medicine," it doeth it in the mission field.

The humor of the language blunderer is always a cause for mirth. We can all laugh at one another's expense in this, for every one who tries to learn a foreign tongue will invariably carry the idioms of his mother tongue over into the new language, and of course make many ludicrous mistakes. In a country like Burma, where so many languages are spoken, and all persons with any claim to education have a trial at English in their own way, mistakes are so common that they cease to attract notice. However, many a time an Englishman or an American has occasion to smile at the efforts of the one with whom he is talking. And although the native is usually too polite to laugh in our faces when we torture his language, he has a quiet burst of humor over it when we are not around.

A man who prided himself on his ability to speak English glibly, when ordering a pair of shoes specified that they must be broad-toed, for he had "thorns between his fingers," (corns on his toes). But this is an exception. Usually the correct thought is conveyed, but the idiom is queer. The following are samples of letters we have often received from parents of the boys attending our school:—

"Dear Sir: If my son appears late at your school again without a chit (note) of recommendation, kindly slap him as he deserves. For which kind favor I will ever pray."

Another parent requested that her boy be excused because of "domestic troubles," which troubles were explained to be the cooking of the rice for dinner.

The teacher urged that specific reasons be given for absence, and the following was presented: "San Po got a sore without cause on the left side of his right knee. Pain as it was, he tried his best to attend his class till Thursday, after which he was entirely confined to his bed. Hardly had it recovered before an eye-sore made its appearance, which was the real cause of his continued confinement during the whole of last week. Therefore, on the strength

of his pains I most respectfully beg you to excuse him."

"Sir,—I am Maung Pu pupil of you write you a letter for few lines. The bee stings to my

The Girls' School at Meiktila, Opened in Recent Years

face for this reason please give one day leave, sir."

A peddler came to our friend's door. He was a jolly fellow with a broad smile congealed on his face. In the course of a bantering conversation he was asked his name. He was very proud to say that he had an English name.

It was "Cheap Jack." In fact, a number of small business men flaunt this name in front of their shops.

The public letter writer is very common, and is often seen sitting under his umbrella in a quiet corner. For a nominal fee he writes for those who are aspiring after respectability or are seeking favors from the higher classes. Usually he does a thriving business. If his English is just a smatter, no matter. Perhaps he has the F. M. (failed matriculation) degree from the university of Calcutta; and capital letters after one's name are enough to substantiate any claim to knowledge in the eyes of a large class of his customers.

A friend of ours tried to re-hire a servant, whom he had discharged because he had to leave town. The servant now held a good position and was loath to leave it, although he liked his former master. So he hired a scribe to write the following consoling note: "Dear Sir you salaam. by Rama Because to write this letter your letter got it me and then reading your letter I am very glad to see. What can i do sir My sahib cannot go from here I am very sorry if not I had come there I cannot come very Long please don't sorry I request to you."

A native Christian, when writing to his teacher, sought, for variety's sake, a synonym of preserve, and rounded off his epistle with, "May kind Providence pickle you."

Signboards make interesting reading, and it is worth a trip around Rangoon to discover new creations. Over a diminutive barber shop is one bidding us "Well Come, My Dear." A rising young doctor blazons his trade with the shingle, "Maung Loo Galay, vaccinated every Thursday." A petty merchant gives promise of sticking to the voyage when he announces himself, "Baboo Khan, Syrup Sailor." A beggar carries this enlightening inscription:—

"Gentlemen and plea
se mercyupon this
poor helpless andl
ame man ladies."

A Chinese whiskey seller has a large sign with the picture of a bottle at the side, and the words, "Ah Foke, licensed to be drunk on the premises or removed."

On a bookstall is: "Books writing paper stationery pencils for the schoolboys all can get." And on a restaurant appears: "Meat, fish, eggs, curry, palow rice, all have got."

The following in front of a signboard painter's

place gives evidence of a very peaceful alliance: "L'entente cordiale of brains, wit, art and energy in reproducing, designing, printing and engraving."

A quack advertises a preparation which is so powerful that it will make water run uphill, and is guaranteed to produce a light-complexioned baby "even if the parents are the darkest black."

To return to the language of the country: The most difficult part of the study of the Burmese is the first part. And this is well, because at first the new-comer goes at it with the most enthusiasm. Long and steady application is absolutely necessary in mastering the rudiments. The usual initiation into the mysteries requires from six to ten hours a day for the first year's work; in fact, all the time that the brain can do good work. A person should have no other work or responsibilities other than what would serve as a change or recreation. We would judge that this first year's work would equal about three year's foreign language study as given in American schools. At the end of this period one is expected to read anything in the Gospel of John, translate at sight the first four chapters, spell correctly, name any common object, and converse freely

in simple conversation. This sounds easy, but there is a long and weary road to it. During the second year, half the time is spent on study, and after being two years in the field the learner is able to take the second examination, which is as far as most candidates go, though then they are usually far from a mastery of the Burmese. These Mongolian tongues have absolutely no connection with, or likeness to, the languages of the West.

The missionary, of course, can work for souls more or less indirectly from the first. At first thought it seems almost a waste of time to spend so much time learning to talk; but we must keep in mind that he is not learning Burmese only, but also Burma and the Burman, all of which is necessary to success.

မိထ္ထိလာမြို့လက်မှုပညာအတတ်နှင့်စာသင်ကျောင်း၏ပဉ္စမနှစ်အတွက်စဖွင့်မည်
နေ့ရက်။ ၁၉၁၅ ချ၊ ဇွန်လ ၁ ရက်။

ဤကျောင်းဌာဆိပ်အတတ်ကိုရင်း၊ လက်မှုပညာအတတ်ကိုရင်းသူငယ်ယောက်ျ
တို့သည်တဖြိုင်နက်သင်ကြားနိုင်သည်။

The Beauty of the Native Script

A prominent factor in the pronunciation of Burmese is betelnut juice; for many of the sounds seem to be modified to suit a mouthful

of *kun*, the national chew. The language in writing looks like soap bubbles and horse shoes playing leap-frog. It is read from top to bottom and from left to right, as in English, but in handwriting the Burman writes each letter backward. The sound of the spoken Burmese does not roll off the tongue as smoothly as its written representation seems to roll across the page. It does not strike the ear as mellifluously as does the Hindustani. Really, there is a lack of euphony, but the speaker improves on this by corrupting certain sounds and filling in awkward places with meaningless syllables.

Monosyllables are the rule, and exceptions to this are compounds. The alphabet consists of thirty-two letters, each with a sound of its own; but certain appendages are added to all letters, which multiply the sounds into the hundreds. With a few exceptions the sounds are similar to those in English, the tendency being to have no vowel sounds at the beginning of a word nor consonant sounds at the end. Many of our English words end in *ng*, and many Burmese words begin with this combination. Foreigners generally find it difficult to say *nga* (fish). To be exact, words do end in consonant sounds, but only half of their full value in English is pronounced in Burmese. For in-

stance, when we say *bit*, at the last expulsion of breath we let the tongue drop from the roof of the mouth and the air is expelled through nearly closed teeth; but the Burman says it without dropping the tongue or expelling the breath. Try saying it as he does.

Compared to the number who try, few foreigners learn Burmese well; and the same can be said of Burmans learning English. One can absorb the common street usage of Hindustani in the East, just by often hearing ear-catching expressions of it. But Burmese "goes in one ear and out the other" without an accident.

There is no common greeting word in the Burmese language. The native of India says "Salaam," which means "Peace be with you." But "Salaam" does duty for, "Good morning," "Thank you," "Bon voyage," "Good-by," "Come again," "Welcome," "You are right," "My respects to you," "Good afternoon," "Good evening," and "Good night." But the Burman contents himself with a smile in passing, an "Are you well?" when he comes, and an "I will go" when he goes.

There is much to be learned about the expression of the ideas of a people by the way they word their proverbs. Truth is the same

the world round, but the similes with which it is expressed often differ. Here are some Bur-

Boys at the Monastery School

mese proverbs with the corresponding English ones:—

In a forest of pith the castor-oil plant is king. Among the blind the one-eyed man is king.

It is only where there is an elevation that a shadow is cast. There is no smoke without some fire.

Should the front part of the house be hot, the back part will be uncomfortable. When chief persons disagree, there is unhappiness for all.

Playing a lute near a buffalo. Casting pearls before swine.

When two buffaloes fight, the grass between them can not prevent it. On two horns of a dilemma.

Day does not dawn because the hen crows. This is said to an interfering, officious woman.

You can't straighten a dog's tail by threading it through a tube. You can't reform a scoundrel.

Though the dog flea may jump, he raises no dust. This is said to little people who try to injure big ones.

Though the hen may cackle all day, she lays but one egg. What will be, will be.

Teaching the king of the crocodiles the water business. Carrying coals to Newcastle.

Every bird is as beautiful as the vulture. As good fish are in the sea as ever came out of it.

Iron destroys and rusts itself. Man his own enemy.

In the following rhyme I have put a few of the idioms which are peculiar to the Burmese language:—

A "little man" is Burmese term for *boy;*
His "stomach's pleasant" when he's *full of joy;*
His "life's no good" when he is *pained* or *sick;*
He says "quick, quick," when we'd say *very quick.*

Our *chairs* to him are simply "foreign seats";
He "finds" the man with whom by chance he
meets;
When he is *angry*, then his "heart is bad";
His "stomach's little" when he's very *sad.*

He has "arrived" when he has *seen* a place;
For *Never mind*, he says, "There is no case."
A "devil killer" is a *gun* that shoots;
He "drinks his cigarette" and "rides his
boots."

When *moneyless*, he "has not brought his
pice";
He says "too nice" when he means *very nice;*
"Talk words" is just his way to entertain;
A "fire carriage" designates a *train.*

She Sells Custard Apples

CHAPTER X

FRUITS OF THE GROUND

AS WHEN a Burman thinks dinner he thinks rice, so when he thinks farming he thinks the same article—that substantial grain-food of three-fourths of the world's people. And because to the other fourth rice suggests only occasional soup-stock, breakfast food, and raisin pudding, that other fourth has something economical and appetizing to learn from the rice-eaters.

The crop is planted everywhere in the bottom-land mud puddles and on the upland hillside terraces; and there is a dry land variety also. The rich, wavy green of the limitless stretches of the paddy-fields of Lower Burma affords a charming background for many a lovely view.

The cultivation of rice is primitive and simple. The seed is sown thickly in small beds first. The fields are divided by low earth ridges into irregular patches at slightly differing levels, the better to control the water supply. These patches are flooded with water, and stirred

with a crude plow to a soupy consistency. When the plants are large enough they are set out by hand in the standing water,—a tedious task, when one considers that they are set as close together as wheat is usually drilled. While the crop grows, the care of it is a matter of keeping the water at a proper level. It is reaped with a sickle. A mowing machine would mire in the soft ground. The threshing is done by flailing or trampling, and the paddy thus produced looks much like oats as fed to horses. The husk is commonly removed by pounding the grain on a stone with a large, hammer-like affair worked by the weight of the body.

Long before some ingenious American produced "puffed rice," by "blowing it from guns," the hill-tribes of Burma had been puffing rice for centuries—without the use of "guns," which is more wonderful still. On market day in the hill-country a little Burmese woman will sit down beside a pot of boiling oil, take a handful of cooked rice with which a little sticky liquid has been mixed, mould it into patties, take it between two sticks, and souse it up and down in the hot oil. In less than a minute it is puffed rice, "blown to eight times its normal size"; and with a little salt added it makes a tasty, crisp biscuit to eat out of hand.

But the Burman regales himself with something else in the line of natural foods besides rice. There are a few other grains raised, corn principally, but legumes and vegetables abound

Threshing Rice by the Tramping of Water Buffaloes

in their season. Peanuts are plentiful and cheap, though of an inferior grade. Tomatoes grow small. Potatoes can be grown well only in the higher lands. The earth is hoed into hills, and some wood or leaves is burned in each hill before planting. This is to kill the grubs and insects; and it is a sample of the terrific fight the cultivators have to prevent animal and insect life from destroying the crops. With all their work the tubers produced remind one too much of marbles in size and shape.

The vegetables peculiar to the tropics thrive: yams, artichoke, okra, brinjal (like egg-plant), and many other unnamed-in-English garden products that go well in a boiled dinner. Burma needs a great genius of cookery to discover and invent preparations of native vegetables to suit the taste of the foreigner.

Fruits are abundant,—yellow, red, and green bananas; pineapples, cocoanuts, oranges, limes, custard apples, guavas, papayas (pronounced pah-pah-yas), jack fruits, mango-steens, dorians, and so on deliciously.

On our first long walking trip in the Shan Hills one hot season, we came suddenly upon some bushes that hung over the road and were weighted down with what looked at a distance

like little yellow flowers. What was our surprise on reaching them to see yellow raspberries in such super-abundance that after we had eaten all we could, and had filled what we had to carry them in, we passed on with the regret that we had done them an injustice. Farther up, we found larger and more luscious black ones to heighten our delight. We hadn't seen a raspberry for years.

There are five of the fruits in the list just given that are very common and well tasted in the tropics, but which scarcely ever find their way into colder climes, obviously because they will not grow there, will not keep long enough to be shipped in a ripe condition, and may not be shipped green as bananas are. At the risk of failing utterly, I shall endeavor to picture to the reader's mind some conception of these five delectable fruit treasures of the tropics. I am positively assured that I shall offend some who already know the fruits, since my descriptions, in their opinions, will be wrong or entirely inadequate; for who can describe a flavor? But for the sake of satisfying curiosity I shall try. Those who know may skip this. And those who don't know may practise a good drill in imagination.

The *dorian*—to begin with the one which

the novice would rather not have included at all—is a fruit with an atmosphere, so much so that it preempts the air-space for fifty feet around it with an odor that disgraces description. A dorian can't be hidden—except in a vacuum! The first sniff of it a respectable nose gets is suggestive of something in the advanced stages of decay (to put it mildly); and yet it is a perfectly good fruit that has a right to attention, and odoriferously demands the recognition of that right by everyone with a sense of smell. It grows on a tree, and is about the shape of a lemon and the size of a large coconut. The color is green-turning-yellow, and there are small spines on its rind. Most of its bulk is made up of pith; but embedded in this are a few large, hard, brown seeds; and surrounding these seeds there is a layer about a quarter of an inch thick of soft, creamy substance which is the hidden treasure of the dorian lover. Of course the real proving is in the tasting, however sure one may be that it is in the smelling; and the taster usually holds his nose in the first trial in order to brave it with any degree of olfactory comfort. And it tastes—like cooked, rotten onions; that is, if we subtract the peculiar dorian flavor that goes with it, for which there is no simile adequate. And—that is, again—

it tastes like this at first. But right here is the peculiar part of it. While the smell is disgusting and the taste is almost as bad, yet

Coconuts at their Prime

there is something about it that bids you come again. And if you are sensible you *will* come again. The first time you loathe it, the second time you tolerate it, the third time you want it, and the fourth time you can't get long without it. Sounds like a stimulant or a narcotic, doesn't it? Yet it is neither, and not in any way harmful. It is amusing to see the old palate at it going through the smack-lip operation, and at the same time a new arrival almost nauseated over the same innocent-looking fruit. It is easy to start an argument at any time in any company over the taste of dorian.

> Dorian's a fruit in such a loathing held,
> To be detested needs but to be smelled;
> But, eaten oft, it ceases to annoy;
> At first we gag, submit, and then enjoy.

When *guavas* are mentioned, think of pears; for perhaps the guava comes nearer being like a pear than like any other temperate zone fruit. More rounded than a pear in shape, it has a somewhat similar skin, and also resembles it in size and in the nature of its seeds. The edible part has the woody, grainy texture of a poor pear, is rather juiceless and slightly sweet, but not tart.

When we first disembarked at Bombay we

were mistreated to a guava to eat as part of our lunch. I would just as readily have relished a raw potato. I remember that on first tasting it I thought that perhaps at one time in the remote past it had been a fairly desirable fruit; but that at least my specimen had very much deteriorated, as any fruit will do by poor cultivation; and that a mild dose of stomach bitters had been injected into it. But such is a guava —raw. However, it redeems itself. The proof is in the preparation of it. Slice it, and let it stand in sugar and water for a few hours, and you have something equal to sliced raw peaches. Cook it, and it makes a sauce to suit the taste of the most fastidious.

We do not know why a *custard-apple* should be called an apple, unless because it isn't at all like one. Or maybe it is for the same reason that a pineapple is called an apple, whatever reason that is. And right here we have the likeness. It develops on the same lines as a pineapple. In size and shape like a short, fat pine cone, it grows from a central core at its base. Instead of the spines and tough rind of the pineapple it has roughened, soft, green lobes on its surface.

The whole inside is edible; and is eaten by breaking the fruit open, and supping it out with a spoon. Custard is the word for it;

for it has that appearance and consistency, with the seeds about the soft cone resembling raisins, except that they are hard. The flavor

Climbing the Toddy Palm to Get the Juice from which is Made the Favorite Burmese Beverage

is not pronounced; it is sweetish, but not tart. Perhaps warmed vanilla ice cream would describe it.

Of *papayas* we will begin by stating that they are like muskmelons—and then tell how they are not like them. The papaya grows on a tree, and not on a vine—a tree that, like the famous mustard plant of the parable, becomes great from a small seed in a short time. During the second season from the planting of the seed, under favorable conditions (one of which is plenty of water), it reaches a height of ten feet, with a trunk diameter of three inches, and at this age will mature fruit. The wood is very soft, and the plant does not do well after the first few seasons. It belongs to the palm family, and has a tuft of long leaf-fronds at the top, with the fruit clustering about the stem just beneath these leaves.

The papaya has the form of a lemon or a pear, varies in size from that of a large potato to that of a hubbard squash, and has a smooth, green rind that turns slightly yellow when ripe. On the inside the meat is arranged just like that of a muskmelon, and is the same color and degree of firmness. There is the same hollow in the center, but the seeds are altogether different—half the size of a pea, black, and bitter to the taste.

The flavor of this refreshing fruit is very like that of the cantaloupe, with a little bitter added. This last seems to be against the likeableness of the fruit at first, but one grows not to notice it. In fact, it has certain curative properties for some maladies, and medicines are compounded from it. Perhaps there is no more healthful food-fruit known in the tropics than papayas. The trees bear nearly the whole year round, and the fruit is quite cheap in price. It takes its place with the cool shower and the breathing exercise as a whetting stimulant to begin the day.

The queen of the tropical fruits is the *mango*. There are many varieties—as many as of apples; but whether long and slim, or short and fat; green or red or yellow-with-a-pink-cheek, fibrous or pulpy, the mango takes the prize. The tree is large and symmetrical, and is among the best for shade and ornament. As a denizen of the front lawn it calls for no apologies.

In size like an average potato, the shape of the fruit is like a navy bean slightly side-flattened. There is just one seed, embedded in the center, and formed like an elongated lima bean. But the most attractive part is between the seed and the skin. Stringy with sweet-potato stringiness, tart with lemon sour, sweet-

ened to perfection, with the juiciness of the Bartlett pear out-juicified, it tastes like—a mango! Incomparable!

It is eaten by cutting off slices, or by cutting it in two, and resorting to the use of a spoon. Finger bowls come handy. But, not to mention table-manners, there is a more satisfactory way: Put a dozen mangoes into a large basin, secure a sharp knife, roll up your sleeves, and go at it—stopping only when the juice drips off your elbows. You will begin with a smile, end with a laugh, and conclude that if there is any fruit better than mangoes it is more mangoes.

CHAPTER XI

THE BEASTS THAT PERISH

Elephants

THE impression prevails in many countries that the chief use of the elephant is to look big, to carry around the reputation of being the bulkiest of land animals. But it would indeed be a pity if such mountains of bone and muscle could not be harnessed at least to lean against the world's work and help to make it move. To hundreds of the tame elephants in Burma, life is more than a circus or a zoo. Their deliberate movements and loosely hung skin often deceive one into thinking that they are awkward and clumsy; but rather, they are capable of moving quickly, and of performing work which requires skill, intelligence, and delicacy. In this "land of the white elephant" there are still thousands of these beasts (all black), the wild ones roaming in herds in the jungles, browsing upon the foliage, and sporting at the favorite baths in the rivers. Those in captivity are used principally by the large lumber companies, gathering and

Tame Elephants are very Skillful at Piling Timbers, Displaying almost Human Intelligence in Placing Them in Perfect Order

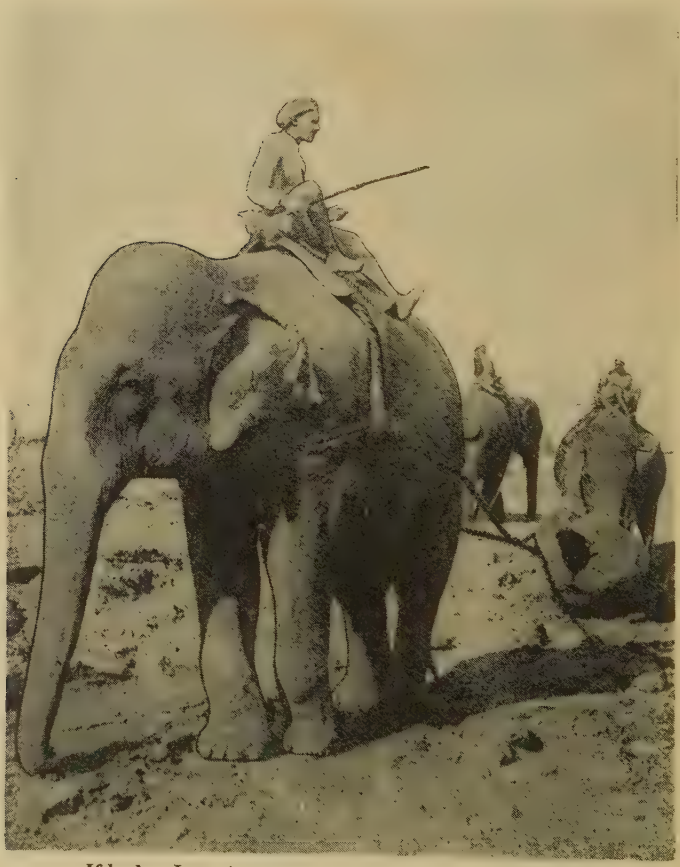
piling teakwood logs in the forests. The Karen people own many of them, and are expert in their handling. Their value ranges from two thousand to four thousand dollars each.

A touching story is told of one of these huge log rollers which recently died in Rangoon. His keeper had been with him for many years; and in his old age, though blind, the affectionate beast was very devoted to the man. As his last moments approached, the great fellow lay upon the ground and swung his trunk around as if reaching for something. The keeper knew what he wanted and came nearer. The trunk gently wrapped him round and drew him closer in loving embrace, while tears gushed from the eyes of both man and beast. In this attitude the huge body breathed its last. Those who saw it say this was a most affecting scene.

It is often necessary in lumbering operations to move these docile animals long distances to other parts of the country. They walk when possible, of course, but bodies of water present obstacles not easily overcome. Sometimes they are transferred from the wharf to the deck of the ship by means of a derrick. Elephants can swim the rivers even though they do not look as if they could, but they are likely to be very independent and obstinate. At one time

we saw a novel way of getting a herd across the Salween River.

We had been doing some prospecting in the



If he but Lean Against the Collar That Log Will Come

Karen country, and had returned the previous evening to the head of stream navigation at Shwegun. The Salween is one of the longest rivers in the world, but it can not be navigated far because of numerous falls in its lower course. At Shwegun the stream was about half a mile wide at low water, the time we were there. The sixty miles to the sea is traveled in a day by little two-deck steam launches about seventy-five feet in length. We were on board all night, due to start downstream at 9 A. M. the next day. But at daylight the boat started upstream. We were surprised, but soon saw the reason. In a few minutes we arrived at a place on the river where a high clay bank was topped by forest trees; and among them stood a herd of twenty-one elephants, many of them towering giants with long tusks. A crowd of Burmese and Karens stood on the bank—early comers to see the show.

At the water's edge stood the first victim—a huge fellow whose small eyes blinked dubiously at the obvious prospect of a forced bath. He was fastened by the forefeet to two firmly set posts. A heavy rope was passed from the chain holding his feet together to the stern of the steamboat. A tin float, shaped like an ordinary harbor buoy, but only about three

feet in diameter, was fastened on his back to help keep him on the surface. His keeper took the usual seat back of his ears. The signal was given, and the boat started across the river, soon pulling the rope taut. At this critical moment the fastenings were loosed from the posts, the driver gave a last prod before making a wild leap for the bank, and Mr. Elephant was drawn down the slippery incline into the water. He trumpeted loudly with fear, and fought desperately to hold back and regain the bank; but steam power triumphed, and he was towed with ever increasing swiftness into deep water. When beyond his depth, he disappeared entirely, only the float telling his whereabouts; and even it was dragged under at times. Then suddenly his trunk appeared with a snort, and, waving about wildly, quickly took on a snakelike curve and seemed to point an accusing finger at us as we stood at the stern of the steamer. Then the huge body rose and thrashed the water into foam as it rolled from side to side and over, struggling to get free. Again it disappeared as if to seek the river bed for a foothold, only to reappear and rest content to be dragged rapidly along near the surface, with the water pouring over the gigantic head as it pours over a smooth rock in a rapid river.

Soon the opposite bank was reached, which was sandy and shallow far out. As the launch could not approach very near, the elephant was left for a minute floundering in about fifteen feet of water. Meanwhile a Burmese racing boat full of men had paddled at top speed with the driver from the other bank. Now they approached the big fellow cautiously, and at a favorable moment the driver adroitly jumped from the prow of the canoe onto the elephant's head. Hastily setting free the float, he urged the beast toward the bank with peculiar twitchings of his knees back of the big ears; while this was being done, the rope was carried to the bank, and a number of men exerted their puny strength to tow him in. And he seemed to have no power nor inclination to resist.

The whole herd of twenty-one was taken over in the same manner. This way of doing it may seem cruel, and some men engaged in the business think it is. But the animals looked none the worse for it, and some seemed actually to enjoy it. We could understand how they might if their forefeet had been free.

One of them, which was so unfortunate as not to have a float at his back, went entirely under as soon as he reached deep water, and stayed there till the other side was nearly gained.

We could tell by the length and angle of the rope that he must have been about twenty-five feet down. As time passed, and he did not come up for air, and seemed to hang as a dead weight, the owners became alarmed, and there was

This is the Way Elephants are Loaded into Ships

much shouting and ado; but beyond an extra powerful spout when his trunk appeared, he acted the same as did the others.

Another gigantic tusker was determined after the first outrage not to submit tamely to such indignities. When his driver gained his back and tried to prod and urge him to land, he

wouldn't go. Instead, he headed for the middle of the river. All the shouting and pulling by the men on the shore hadn't the least effect. He reached the current and swam rapidly downstream. The driver was game and held his seat, but he might as well have been a fly. The launch gave chase, when there was no other way, and after an exciting few minutes the runaway was rounded up half a mile down. He was so tired when he finally landed that he could scarcely walk.

Our boat was so late in getting down the river that we missed the train for Rangoon, but the sight was worth the sacrifice.

Crows

Ask any traveler who has been in India or Burma what sound is the most common and universal, and he will tell you the caw of a crow. With all their millions of people, these lands actually seem to have more crows than human beings. They flock like sparrows in both town and country, and flap themselves into every view.

The crows of the East are in size about halfway between the large crow of America and the blackbird. They are prolific and long-lived; and, being ever alert and quick of movement,

they are not easily destroyed. It is said that a few years ago they became so numerous in some places as to be an extreme nuisance; so the government offered a small bounty for their heads. Then the natives began raising them in captivity in such large numbers that it was a paying industry; so this method of extermination had to be abandoned.

But the crows are one of the greatest blessings of the country. They are its chief scavengers, and are worth more than a thousand doctors and sanitary inspectors. There is nothing that forms a breeding place for germs that crows will scorn as food. In the land of filth producers the crows are filth destroyers. There is no doubt that should these blackwings be cut off, epidemics would gather a much larger toll of human life than they do at present. It is impossible to estimate their true value as scavengers. Because of this, and also for religious reasons, attempts are seldom made to kill them.

In the outlying districts they may be seen by the hundreds, tumbling over one another in the furrows as they follow the plow to eat the exposed grubs. They ride on the backs of the patient and slow-moving bullocks and buffaloes, deftly keeping out of the way of the

swishing tails, and snapping up the insects that swarm about the beasts. They form a mutual benefit society with a cow; and as bossy lies quietly in the shade, chewing her cud, they perch on her nose or ears and pick at the insects and vermin, only having to look sharp when the bovine resents a too-familiar intrusion on her nasal or auditory property rights.

As soon as a train stops at a station, the crows alight with impunity on the cars, and make common cause with their fellow scavengers, the pariah dogs, in seeing which can be first to grab the discarded food thrown from the windows. Many a battle royal is fought between these two for the prize. The dogs have the strength but the crows have the wings and the wits. When the pariah gets there first, often the crows will unite in a body to attack him. And what strategy! Some approach from behind and persistently nag till he makes a dash to drive them off. Then, like a flash, those in front pounce on the morsel and are away with it.

For all the good they do, it is difficult to have patience with them about the house. Ever cawing and ever watchful, they perch at the edge of the safety zone about the back veranda. They are thieves of the bold bandit variety. A

caw, a swoop, a grab, and a swift retreat are the order and method of their predatory raids. Let the housewife or the servant relax vigilance, and through the window comes Mr. Crow, and with a low swish of wings is onto the dining table. There is a rattle and a bang as a dish falls, and a rush to the rescue reveals broken glass, an article of food gone, or the butter suddenly showing its age by crow's-feet lines.

Any small article that shines looks edible to the crow. So it often happens that valuable pieces of jewelry, scissors, and thimbles disappear from the table; and the servant gets the blame. There is no time for the robbers to investigate closely before the raid, and so, since the trinket is indigestible, it is treated as the proverbial pearls are treated by the proverbial swine, and the owner never sees it again. One invalid lady, who was confined to her bed, was horrified at being compelled to lie still while a crow deliberately carried off her false teeth from the table in the room.

One day we were riding in a cart that toiled slowly through the deep sands of the Irrawaddy River bottom, when we came across a number of huge vultures which were drying their feathers in the hot sun after a dip in the river. They stood on the sands and spread their wings

wide, fully ten feet from tip to tip. A number of crows hovered about to catch the insects that swarm around these ugly carrion eaters. For greater convenience, the crows stood on the

Mealtime for the Vultures

outstretched wings of the vultures. The added weight was disconcerting, to say the least, and the big birds began to take the wild and awkward leaps that are characteristic of these clumsy creatures when on the earth. To see the crows bobbing back and forth trying to keep their balance on the wings, and the strenuous but vain efforts of the vultures to dislodge them, was indeed mirth-provoking; and we

greatly enjoyed viewing the maneuvers when scavenger plagues scavenger.

Like all common and unavoidable annoyances, the crow soon ceases to attract notice, and we almost forget its presence. But should I go to the ends of the earth and never return to Burma, the raucous caw of a crow would ever remind me of Burma's blessing and bother of the genus Corvus.

Dogs

To see the dogs of the East is to more easily understand the force of the expression, "Without are dogs," which occurs in the Biblical description of the new earth. Whether this prophecy is to be taken literally or figuratively, such dogs, or any being that such dogs would symbolize, would make heaven very unheavenly. To some minds the word suggests a lovable pet and companion; to others a servant and a protector; but in the East a dog stands for all that is obnoxious in animal life, a scavenger of scavengers.

Then is he worth mentioning? No; except that, whether worthy or not, he forces himself on the attention of human beings in spite of every effort to scorn his existence. To deal with Burma is to deal with dogs. And, besides,

who will say that a scavenger is beneath notice?

Every village has its quota of dogs; and the quota seems to be at the ratio of two dogs to each person. The attitude of the people fosters an increasing number of them. For religious reasons the owners will not kill them. If a dog is maimed or incurably sick it drags itself around till death. Disease attacks them, and scores of mangy, hairless, skin-and-bone canines will prowl and howl about a town and hunt for carrion to eke out their miserable lives. They fight fiercely, and run in packs at night, waking the nervous with their yelps. It is a custom of foreigners to carry a cane to keep them at a distance. But very rarely do they molest people, except when they go mad. It is best always to steer clear of them, especially in hot weather. One of our best and brightest Christian school boys was bitten by a mad dog while on his way to school one day, and though he took the cure provided by the government, he died of hydrophobia a few months later. But as far as we observed, there are no more dogs go mad in Burma, in proportion to their numbers, than in America, or in any other much more dogless country.

But, east as west, "Every dog has his day"; and with many of them in India and Burma

that day is the annual one when a coolie from the "conservancy department" of the local government goes about and throws a piece of poisoned meat to every cadaverous canine that he meets. The next day there is a big dog funeral.

Pests and Pets

When we started for the mission field, our friends presented us with a small, square organ for use in our work. The gift was appreciated; and because we were ignorant we took it along. To begin with, it came to grief at the landing. Four coolies at Bombay were carrying it on their heads, one under each corner, and when they were ready to set it down they calmly stepped out from under it, all together, and let it drop. It was broken badly, but the music-making parts were intact, and it was soon fixed. However, it was doomed to a worse fate. It became an ideal nesting place for household pests. Lizards and mice occupied the lower stories, and huge roaches found homey living stalls just over the reeds. In vain did we take it apart and clean out the broods. There was no way to make it vermin-tight; and since, to add to our burden, the glued parts came loose in the wet season, it had to be sold

for little or nothing. Incidentally we learned that it pays to buy musical instruments and furniture made to stand the tropics; and particularly we were made aware that insect and animal life in Burma fairly swarms.

The reader may question the housekeeping ability of anyone who would allow roaches, mice, and lizards in the house at all. But may we beg a hearing of our case? Sentiment and sanitation fought for the mastery in our minds for a long time. We kept the organ in the interests of sentiment, and passed it on in the interests of sanitation. And, moreover, with the very numbers and persistency of the vermin and the very openness of the houses, let it be said that it is not a disgrace to find these things inside, nor is it much of a disgrace to continue to find them; but it is a disgrace to be content to live with them on equal terms and to give up the fight. It *is* a fight, but not so bad as it sounds. It is simply a matter of taking proper precautions—taking them, and making them habits. From some insects and animals one can't rid himself entirely, though they can be kept at a distance. And in the case of others it pays to transform pests into pets.

Take the lizards, for instance. Reptiles of any sort make my flesh creep. Snakes I hate

as I do the devil, and especially after I one day rescued a half-swallowed toad from one of the slimy rascals. And lizards are classed with snakes. But there are lizards and lizards. In Burma most of them get short shift, even with the natives, who scruple at taking life. One variety is called the praying lizard, because it is nearly always moving its head up and down as if bowing to someone. There is a tradition among the Mohammedans that when one of the heroes of their early history was fleeing from his enemies and had hid in a well, one of these lizards was found near-by pointing out the hiding place with his nodding head. And the Buddhists tell a story that one day when the Burmese king was walking in his garden he saw one of these reptiles bowing to him, as he thought. He was so well pleased at its good manners that he had all the praying lizards caught that could be found in the palace grounds and gold bands fastened about their necks. But these metal collars kept them from moving their heads as before. So he became angry at their lack of thankfulness, and ordered them all killed. Therefore the Mohammedans and the Buddhists consider it a real work of merit to kill these harmless creatures.

Then there is the chameleon-like lizard that

changes its color to suit its surroundings; and the tuk-too, a medium-sized fellow who inhabits the roofs and eaves of houses and keeps out of sight—but not out of hearing. "Oft in the stilly night" he will suddenly wake the sleepers with his raucous "tuk-too, tuk-too" in measured beat, and after several repetitions will close the performance with a gutteral growl. Some think he says "Doctor," but he suggests the undertaker.

Best of all this tribe are the little five-inch lizards that come out on the walls and ceilings of the house at night and catch insects over the light. When, at the beginning of the rains, hundreds of "bugs" of every description pester the student at his evening lamp, he gladly welcomes these little reptiles who have a happy hankering for things with wings. With pleasure he sees the sides of the little fellows get fat on the gorging. They are clean, always keep out of the way, and are welcomed by the good housekeeper for the service they render. Occasionally one will stub his toe on the ceiling and light on the floor with a spat, but in a jiffy he is up the wall again.

There was a tiny individual of this species who used to make nightly visits down the wall to my desk and catch insects. His skin

and flesh were so translucent that I could almost see through him, and could easily make out the black shade of the dinner in his stomach. Down the wall-matting with noiseless rushes and motionless pauses he would come, creeping up on unwary insects like a cat. When close enough he would crouch for a moment, and nothing but the flash of his beady eyes showed life; then his head would shoot forward and his tongue dart out so quickly that my eye could scarcely catch the movement. But he never missed. The insect was inside. Then he would stand and lick his chops, and look at me with great satisfaction. One night he stalked the wrong quarry and got a mouthful of bitter bug. The expression on his elongated countenance was almost human as he slowly spit the thing out, just like a person making a wry face over a dose of quinine.

On the least movement of mine he would scurry away in alarm, although he would run onto my prone hand for his prey. There is no catching these little reptiles. One day an unfortunate member of our brood had his tail crushed off by the closing of a table drawer. The severed organ dropped to the floor and wiggled for a long time, but master lizard managed to get the other three-fourths of him-

self away in good shape. He appeared as usual in the evening hunt after that, and seemed to have no need of a hospital. And every night he had a little more tail, till in a few weeks his brand-new caudle appendage was fully developed.

Likewise also there are the ants. They deserve a long story by themselves; but we must give them attention according to their size. Little ants, big ants, red, black, and white; fighting ants, biting ants, army ants galore. Houses must be built with the ants in mind. Walls are made single so that every crevice can be reached. There are no built-in closets and cupboards. All furniture stands out from the wall, and is set on legs, so that there is a clear view all around it. Any piece of furniture which contains food, such as a cupboard or table, has its feet set in little earthen saucers, and these are kept full of water. If every possibility of their getting at food is removed, the ants do not bother much. But let a little scout find no water in one of the saucers some night, and the next morning the butter will be well peppered with his comrades, and perhaps the whole inside of a loaf of bread be eaten out.

Much has been said about white ants; which by the way are not ants at all, but properly

bear the name termites. They have a light-colored body and resemble ants. They build huge nests below or above ground, and are very destructive. They never work in the light, but always build a covered run-way wherever they commit their depredations; thus they can be traced easily and obstructed. Nearly all kinds of wood, leather, cloth, and such materials, are tasty morsels to the white ant. A board left on the ground at night will sometimes be completely covered by their earthen work-shop the next morning. At one time during the initial stages of our work we neglected to watch, and paid the penalty by having the bottoms of a trunk and a suit-case badly eaten. At another lax period a number of books had their covers nearly all devoured.

Ordinarily the white ants can be kept out by thick cement floors, and an occasional look round to see that they are not starting anything up the outside walls. When we built our house I was sure no sensible white ant would attempt four inches of concrete and one inch of solid cement. But they did, and actually came up through where we could see no sign of a crack or a flaw. One morning I came downstairs to find, right in the middle of the front-room floor, what looked like a little clay model

of a tree. The tiny creatures had bored up through the cement and, finding nothing to eat, had constructed a hollow run-way right up into the air, with branches shooting off in different directions as if trying to feel something edible. Of course we demolished this beginning of a mud forest, and poured crude oil down the hole, which settled them in that place for a long time to come. Various insecticides will kill them; but they are innumerable, resourceful, and persistent.

The stranger to the country concludes from all this that it must be a constant vexation of spirit—and very little vanity—to keep house in Burma. But it isn't, when one gets used to it. In building it is no more difficult and expensive to provide against vermin and pests in Burma than it is to provide against extreme cold in more frigid latitudes. The people are not bothered nearly so much with flies; for, thanks to nature's scavenger system and the English government's excellent sanitary precautions in the towns, there are few flies in the country.

CHAPTER XII

THE HEAT AND THE HILLS

IT IS the month of April. In northern climes nature is just beginning to twitch the corners of her mouth for summer's smile; in south latitudes a winter frown gathers on her brow; in Burma the face of the earth tans and blisters under a zenith sun. Heat is ascending, and you can't get off the top. Heat is descending ,and you can't get out from under. Fume and fret about it, and you add a third source of warmth. Take it coolly and reflect sunshine—literally and figuratively. The world moves fastest at the equator, but its inhabitants who live there must move the most slowly.

Stand here a moment and look down the road. The wavy atmosphere ascends as from a hot stove. Feel the glare of the bare, baked earth in aching eyes and throbbing forehead. Sense the withering, scorching breeze that fairly puffs your face. Your spine carries a dizzy, sickening sensation to your head. Let me draw you back into the shade of the house,

450 Pagodas in one Inclosure, Viewed from Mandalay Hill

even though its 102° seems to give no relief; and put on these dark spectacles to rest your eyes.

But 102° in the shadow is not extremely hot. Why such care? On an August baking day or a July haying day at home you have felt as hot as you do now. But mark this: it is not so much the tropic heat that injures as it is the tropic rays. Scientists have found that sun rays have other qualities than light and heat. The actinic rays, those capable of producing chemical changes, are strong in the direct rays of the torrid belt. They pierce to the brain and effect injurious and lasting results, usually a weakening of nerve power.

It is a peculiar fact that, while in India and Burma persons from colder climates wear thick pith helmets, called *topees*, and often carry a sunshade besides, yet the natives of temperate zones who reside in other parts of the tropics, especially in the West, find a thin straw hat a sufficient protection. It has been suggested that the wearing of a topee is only an unnecessary habit on the part of foreign residents in India. However that may be, there is grave danger in going out in the noonday sun without one, as many have learned to their unfitting for labor. One may "get the sun" without feeling very hot; and some persons are more susceptible to its influence than others. From casual observation it would seem that light-

complexioned individuals fare worse in this respect than the darker ones.

From June to October the climate is warm and wet; from November to February it is cool and dry; from March to May it is hot and dry. But during the whole annual round the midday heat is uncomfortable. Aside from the rays before mentioned, the foreigner suffers from the almost unchanging high temperature. Day by day the vital fluid becomes more thin and sluggish, and there is a "washed-out" feeling which is very depressing. Frequent furloughs home are impossible. The heights provide the only respite. Every yard upward is a mile northward. "As the shadow of a great rock in a weary land," so is the air of the hills in the torrid heat. We are not oblivious to the lesson conveyed, and our desire for the "heavenly hills" becomes greater at the thought.

I had spent two hot seasons in the pit, and was off for the hills at last. A wakeful night ride on a dusty, stuffy train landed me at the nearest railway station, thirty miles from a chosen retreat. The others had gone before, and I was to make the trip alone on a bicycle. A friend had warned of *dacoits* (robbers), but, too eager to wait till day, when the half-moon rose for my beacon at three o'clock, my mount

glided out over the white reaches of road that wound around among the rice-fields and through the jungle. The height of the forest and the density of underbrush cast Cimmerian shadows over the way; but the weird feeling attendant therewith was relieved by the twinkling of thousands of fireflies flitting beneath the trees on either side.

After a ride of several miles all signs of human presence and habitation were passed. Quietness was resting heavily, when suddenly an owl smote the stillness with a blood-freezing screech, and scurried away ahead, awakening the echoes into a score of answering cries. Other night-birds made protest to the dark apparition that so stealthily invaded their quiet domain, as it sped swiftly over the white roadway, and was gone. But for all that the rider shuddered at feelings uncanny, there was something exhilarating about coming close to the haunts of these habitants of the forest who are in league with the night.

At a near approach to the foot of the hills, just beyond a sharp turn in the road, several huge black objects loomed up in the pale moonlight. The road was completely obstructed, and I alighted with alacrity, moving forward cautiously to investigate. I was taken aback at

finding them elephants, tame of course, but the largest I have ever seen, and quite repellent. They were quietly browsing on the bushes at the roadside, and at first seemed unattended; but soon I perceived a keeper on the back of each one, almost invisible as they slept or showed the faint glow of the crude cigars they smoked. Slipping past the gigantic bodies, I felt distinct relief at leaving them behind.

As the east showed faint tracings of approaching day, the ascent was begun. It was necessary to push my wheel for sixteen miles up the winding road as I walked. Up, up, up, mile after mile, around and back, twisting, curving, but always ascending—dragging footsteps enlivened only by the near prospect of cooling breezes and the more distant one of coasting down these steeps on my return. Gradually rising above the heat and dust and glare, the air ever becoming perceptibly more refreshing, I came to autumn in the spring. For was it not April? and here were the dry leaves crackling under my feet and falling in showers at every gust. Red and brown and yellow they were, and all the tints—but you know. There was that indescribable influence in the air that I had thought only October knew,—the quiet peace of summer falling asleep,

the glorious "Indian summer" of a more familiar land.

The jungle giants, with the fitful help of the passing breeze, were fast laying aside their erstwhile garments, finding best wardrobes in sheltered nooks among the rocks. But strange for me to see and relate, they still maintained a liberal show of green, seeming to have taught the people of this land their custom of doffing the old and donning the new in the same action. The denser foliage was gone, however, and many former retreats of parrot and monkey were exposed, only forming better hiding-places for the ground-folk, bright-colored pheasants and feather-tailed squirrels. Trees of a hundred years stretched up tiptoe from the high cliffs or crouched low in the nether valleys. Springs of clear water dripped from the rocky steeps and gurgled under the well-kept culverts. Over all, the morning sun broke through the autumn haze, like the royal chariot appearing through the smoke of battle, bringing courage and cheer to the sentinels of the night.

I stood entranced, thrilled, dumb. Burma had redeemed itself. From the hills had come my help.

There was inspiration in it. And being given to rhymes, as I sat on a convenient stone

by the roadside, I took out my little notebook and pencil and wrote:

When the atmosphere is fiery in the oven of Rangoon,
And the oven door is closed upon the sultriness of noon;
When the heat arises wavingly and sunshine falls in sheets;
And the dust is light and choky midst the friction of the streets,
Turn away from perspiration and a hundred season ills,
To the high and healthy Thandaung, viewful Thandaung of the hills.

When the eye-balls burn like fire in the glare of Mandalay;
Earth and firmament conspire to disgrace the month of May;
When the fever-touch of prickly heat makes clothes rub like a file,
And you just pretend to sleep and disremember how to smile;
Flee away from all the broiling and the worry-thought that kills,
And invest a month in Thandaung, cooling Thandaung of the hills.

When the lake is burnished silver by desirable
Meiktila,
And there's no relief from parching even in a
lakeside villa;
When a dull, indifferent appetite makes brows-
ing food a duty,
And the misery of living far eclipses all the
beauty;
Then away to sylvan valleys where the cloud-
mist sweet distills
O'er the wooded peaks of Thandaung, restful
Thandaung of the hills.

Denizens of dust, remember, going up is going
north;
'Tis the season when the hilltops pour their
autumn beauties forth.
Quit the petty earth annoyances, the city's
vain conceits;
Revel to your heart's content in Burma's sky
retreats.
Flout the doctor's bitter medicines and sugar-
coated pills;
Fly away above the marshes; visit Thandaung
of the hills.

The experience of over a hundred years of Protestant missions in southern Asia has taught

mission boards that the missionary must have a month or six weeks in the hills every year during the hot season in order to continue in

A Rest Home in the Shan Hills for the Burma Missionaries

the field and maintain health. Also that he should spend a year in the homeland after long periods of work to keep that freshness and vigor that is so necessary to the life-time laborer in depressing heathen lands. And this for ordinary circumstances and average health. Frail bodies often must have longer furloughs and more frequent changes, or not continue in the work at all. If the missionary does not

occasionally break the strain of the work, the strain of the work will break him. It is economy in the long run to conserve health even at what seems excessive costs.

The foreigner from temperate zones soon learns to appreciate the hill stations of tropical countries. He longs for a permanent rest-home in high altitudes, to which he can fly as to a refuge when the humid heat is insufferable in the plains.

While our early missionaries frequented Thandaung and rented quarters; in later years Kalaw, a more desirable location in the Shan Hills east of Meiktila, was chosen as our permanent hill home. And there, in a climate that rivals the central southern United States, commodious bungalows have been built. The workers resort to them in groups of three or four families at a time during the months of March, April, and May. When the rains begin in June all are ready to descend to the plains again and plunge anew into the work with fresh zeal. A native is hired to take care of the houses and grounds the year round for a small wage. They are provided with beds, tables, chairs, and some dishes, while the occupants bring with them all the necessary personal effects that are to make comfortable their camp-meeting-like outing.

Kalaw hides in a lovely little valley in the pine country, where the crisp, clean pine needles carpet the ground inches thick. Huge clumps of bamboos cluster along the streams; and harmless forest fires glow in the night. It is the haunt of monkeys and deer; the place of raspberries wild and strawberries tame, of pineapples and figs, of rare quality potatoes, puffed rice, and peanut candy; in short, while not possessing all that is ideal, it is a change—a change of temperature, of air, of food, of surroundings, of view, of noises and smells; and a change is rest to those who are sick of sameness and routine.

But the hill vacation is not spent in idleness. There are neglected letters to write, put-off reading and study to do, long tramps in the open, and vigorous play. And too, a missionary could not come into contact with the comparatively few hill folk without doing something to help them just a little. So sundry friendly overtures are made toward the simple natives who are met on jungle trails or in the little markets. It is significant that the nearer these primitive people are to "nature" the farther they are from God. The most isolated are generally the most base, yet they are more simple-hearted and easily reached by gospel truth.

One day we met a happy exception to this baseness, if appearances count. We were going for a little tramp up a valley among the hills and met an old cultivator driving his skinny cows and carrying a few sticks home for the evening fire. He was bent far over upon a cane, and everything he wore was of one color, that of mud. As we passed he raised his head, and we were shocked — agreeably shocked. Instead of the usual black, toothless cavern that

A Padaung Woman, One Type of the Hill People. Long Necks are the Style, and She Adds Rings to Hers Till it Conforms to the Latest

serves as a mouth in the faces of so many of those aged men, or the sin-wrinkled countenance of a man grown old in debasing habits, we saw a face that fairly beamed goodness and good-nature. It was very old and seamed, and there was not a tooth in his head; but every one of those crow-toes about his eyes told a story that I should love to have repeated in detail. He accorded us a very benediction of a smile, mumbled that we had better not go very far as night was coming on, and hobbled on his way. I hope the picture of that old man's face will remain with me forever, and I believe it will.

No doubt the far-scattered hill-tribes of Burma would get much less attention from Christianizing, civilizing influences if the heat of the lowlands did not drive the missionaries to the high retreats every year. Contact begets interest, and interest begets love. And, too, as some of the most pleasant memories of the Christian worker in torrid climates are connected with his hill vacations, we are led after all to exclaim, "Blessed be heat!" No heat, no hills. And the hills are a world of comfort.

CHAPTER XIII

PLAY TIME

IT MAY seem strange to begin a chapter bearing such a title by describing a funeral; but the reader will conclude that it appropriately belongs here. It would seem from observation that all non-Christian peoples make the ceremonies attendant on a death an occasion for having a gay time.

"Why doesn't the procession proceed?" I questioned, on joining a group of Burmese friends who stood waiting for a delayed funeral train.

"They are waiting for the lemonade cart to come up." was the answer. I was surprised with that surprise which comes from being many times surprised. A funeral waiting for the lemonade! Curiosity bade me attend that funeral.

And while we are waiting allow me to digress a little. In Rangoon there are native undertakers who get their business from the Christian—but not altogether Westernized—native population. One such undertaker has a hearse

which is an imitation of the most imposing American pattern—ssuggestive ornaments above, glass sides, white draperies inside, a low platform for the coffin, high front seat, high-stepping team, and all. Coolies from the street, not friends of the deceased, are mustered as pall-bearers, and these are provided by the funeral director. These bearers run alongside the hearse as the corpse is being conveyed to the cemetry.

One day we met this grand equipage coming back from the graveyard after its usual trip. As it swept past, our Western eyes were shocked by a sight that for the moment took our breath. The four pall-bearers were sitting one behind the other inside the hearse where the coffin had recently rested, and peering out from among the curtains. Their dusky faces and roving eyes, together with the close position into which they were compelled to squeeze, gave on an instant the impression that the dead had come to life and in surprised protest was seeking a way out of his confinement. To us, who never before had even imagined such a situation, the effect was extremely weird and uncanny. However, these were not Burmans. The incident is a little touch of India, and illustrates that in the East one may expect to see strange combinations.

Though the Buddhist religion is very pure in principle when compared with other religions of India and Burma, yet there are few Buddhists today who keep strictly the precepts of Gautama. Devil-worship is mingled with their beliefs, and many superstitious practises are followed. For many of the rites performed by the devotees of the great Indian prince, few worshipers can give the reason or origin. This is very true of the customs connected with funeral ceremonies. My narration will be of what is done at a funeral rather than of any explanation of its significance. If any reasons are suggested, let it be understood that they belong to the onlooker; for very likely they may not exist in the minds of the participants, whose processes of mind are absolutely different from ours.

A death occurs, and the pent grief of the human heart, in the presence of the great sting, overflows in manifestations known too well by all of us. A band of music is engaged, and begins to play, continuing to do so night and day until the burial. In all seriousness we should term this the classical music of Burma. Being unappreciative, we call it noise. The instruments are few in number, consisting of a kind of flute, some crude drums thumped with the fleshy part of the hand, and sticks which are

A Funeral Scene Before the Procession, the Decorated Hearse in the Background and Musicians in Front

clapped together. Sometimes to these is added the tapping of little bells. When the players tire, others take their places; and as the long hours of the night drag on, those who watch, in order to keep a-"wake," gamble, play games, and drink in a fashion not unfamiliar to other peoples. This band playing, which is not entirely without an element of real music, has no doubt something to do with driving away the evil spirits or enticing the good. We could recommend it for the former purpose.

Meanwhile some male member of the family is off to the saw-pit, and soon returns with lumber for the coffin, which he nails together in the street in front of the house. Friends and relatives are called, and there is much festivity. Judging by the actions of those present, the whole affair is treated with a spirit of indifference or levity. The Burmese expression for funeral means "the unpleasant bearing out," but appearances would cause us to omit the negative prefix of the adjective.

The coffin is a rough box, decorated or not according to the will or affluence of the person who bears the expense. If delay causes the corpse to become obnoxious, powdered charcoal or other preservative is used to cover it. Formerly dead bodies were kept for some days

before burial, but it is now coming to be the custom to inter within a much shorter time.

The hearse occupies much attention. One is built new for each funeral, from the wheels up. The frame-work is of bamboo, and the decorations consist of colored cloth, paper, and tinsel, arranged with the highest artistic skill of the makers. Sometimes the canopy top is made very high, especially when a priest or some prominent person is carried, and then there is great difficulty passing under trees and wires. Usually four wheels are used, a departure from the cart habit, and the writer has seen a carriage for the coffin of a child constructed by connecting two bicycles with a rigid frame. Of whatever form, rigidity characterizes these vehicles, and, having no means of guidance, they are sure to be trouble wagons with other than most careful handling. In anticipation of difficulty the coffins are tied on with ropes.

First in the procession, the priests march sedately; then the corpse on its vehicle appears, propelled by friends or whoever wishes to lend a hand, usually the gay young men of the town. The immediate family of the deceased follow the hearse on foot. Then come the gifts for the priests. These are borne in flat baskets on the heads of the most beautiful and well-dressed

maids of the neighborhood. They walk in two rows, and thoroughly enjoy the distinction. Their baskets contain boxes of matches, candles, fruits, cigars, betel-nut boxes, and other such small articles, while carts follow them bearing bags of rice and the other heavier gifts. Sometimes Indian coolies are employed to join the procession and carry articles dangling from poles on their shoulders. It is a unique sight to see slippers, umbrellas, lamps, tins of biscuits, rugs, and robes thus borne along. The band cart has a prominent place, and the players keep up a continuous tooting and thumping. Last of all, but, to all appearances, not least in importance, come the refreshment carts, filled with lemonade, gifts, and eatables for the attending crowd. Whatever the purpose of this contingent at the rear, it works out in insuring a popular funeral, if popularity is to be measured in crowds of self-seekers.

Well, our particular procession is at last ready to start off again. The crowd has assured itself that the lemonade cart is in evidence, and is content to trudge on. We join the happy throng, and precede or follow the hearse, or make short cuts at will, in imitation of all the others. And oh, here is a new element that we hadn't noticed before, because they were

mingling with the crowd—clowns, at least they look and act just like the clowns of the circus parade at home in America. They are half naked men, supposed to be dressed and painted to represent angels and devils. And such antics, and joking and laughter! Small boys go into ecstacies. The clowns are pulling a little affair mounted on wheels, which is made of cloth and looks like a cannon. There is great interest in this, but all it does for the present is to pique curiosity.

He Attends the Funeral to Represent an Angel

The priests have gone far ahead and are

sitting by the roadside to rest. With the excuse of making up lost time, there is great bustle at the hearse. Some playful boys have been pushing it back and forth and jumping on for a ride. These are unceremoniously knocked aside, and while they cry the onlookers laugh. The men who push and pull are smoking and joking. Away they go on a run, down a hill, through a sandy place, and up on the other side. Having no way of guiding it, the conveyance swerves off the road into the ditch and sways fearfully. Perhaps it is not an accident. We have seen youth wink at each other, lift the back end over and give the affair a push sideways. Anyway, no one seems bothered. There is much yelling and laughter as the vehicle is righted, backed up, and sent on its way again.

In due time the parade reaches the cemetery. Burmese burial-places seem to have been located with the idea of not wasting on the dead any land that is useful to the living. Especially in the upper country there is such a scarcity of fertile ground that the cemetries are placed on stony plots. Funerals are held in the afternoon; and since morning some friends of the deceased have been engaged in digging the grave on this desolate hilltop. But it is hard

work, and they have reached a depth of only two feet when the procession arrives. But it does not matter; the crowd will help; and perhaps that is the underlying reason why more energy has not been displayed in getting it done in time.

One of the vanguard volunteers, grasps the hoe-like mattock, and jumps into the hole. The thuds of the instrument and the grunts of the digger are accompanied by the usual witticisms indulged in by the crowd when there are many bosses and one workman. When the first recruit has worked up a sweat, another takes his place, and so on till the grave is deep enough, —which depth usually stops far short of six feet.

Meanwhile the coffin is removed from its carrier and laid to one side. In fact, it receives very little if any attention during the whole ceremony. Everything done seems to be centered on the living, not on the dead. The priests range themselves in a row, and then seat themselves on mats laid on the ground. Just back of each priest is a little boy, his attendant, who has come to bear away the presents. And in front of the priestly row all these gifts are piled; while beyond them the relatives of the dead are grouped in a kneeling posture. The

priests in concert mumble what seems to be a prayer, at a rapid chant, and the worshipers mumble in response as they bow low and touch their heads to the ground again and again. This continues for several minutes; and then suddenly the priests rise to their feet and thus indicate that the procedure is finished. This rising is the signal for the small-boy attendants of the holy men to make a wild scramble for the presents, each trying to do the best he can by his master. The yellow-robed figures disdainfully ignore this disgraceful action, and, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left, they walk in single file back to the *kyaung*, followed by the proud little gift-grabbers.

Meanwhile again—for there are four centers of attraction, which keep the crowd surging back and forth—there is a clamor for the refreshments. The lemonade—an aerated water, like "soda pop" in America—is distributed and popped, and there is great exuberance of spirits. Sweets and biscuits also go the round; and quite a banquet ensues.

Fourthly, the clowns do their prettiest and ugliest and funniest. The little cannon is set off and goes flying about over the ground as it explodes, hitting the legs of the onlookers and chasing small boys. This causes great hilarity, and is equal to the greased pig.

And then,—the crowd goes home. For what's the use of staying when the show is over and they are under no obligation to respect the dead as we do. In this funeral the refreshment period was not timed right, and the grave is not finished. From habit we linger to see the body interred. And we see what otherwise we would have missed—the manifestations of unconsoled and unrestrained grief on the part of those near and dear to the one who to them is gone forever. They wail, and roll on the ground, and pull out handfuls of hair. It is pitiable. The sorrow of those "who have no hope" is heart-breaking, even to those who are but spectators. So even in Burma, death is an enemy after all.

But enough of this, and on to merry times which, to the reader at least, will suggest happier thoughts.

No one needs to be told that children the world over love to play; and the only difference in them is that some have more opportunity to play than others, and so know more about it. In countries where the children have to work in early years they turn their work into play. Burmese girls and boys—especially boys—have a play chance above the average in eastern lands. Men and women play, too, but first mention

is due to the natural players—the youngsters.

I suppose that, ever since the wondering eyes of little Cain and Abel saw the first apple or walnut drop from a tree and roll down the hill, the world's children have liked to play with balls. Of course Burmese boys are not found playing ball, but they play with a ball. There is a difference. I tried in the school at Meiktila, by instruction and long-continued example, to play baseball; but they never got beyond the "butter-finger" stage, and excused themselves by saying that baseball is a boy's game, but football is a man's game; forsooth, because the English officials have encouraged football. The football played is the real kicking variety, and is becoming quite popular.

The Burman schoolboys make a hand ball out of something, even if it is only a rolled-up rag or a wound-up length of cane. One ball game of theirs is played like this: Say sixteen boys will choose up equal sides. All gird up their skirt-like *longees* about their loins for greater freedom. Then the boys on one side climb on the backs of those on the other side in the way familiar to us all. The eight "horses" arrange themselves in a circle, each one about fifteen feet from the next. Then the riders toss the ball to each other around the circle; and

the rule is that the horses must stand in one spot while the game is in progress, though they may move their bodies in order to make the riders miss the ball if possible. If the ball goes around once without being missed, the whole group move around one space to the left, amid great shouting on the part of the victorious riders. This is one inning—or may we call it an upping? If this is repeated eight times, or until the horses get around to where they started, the riders have won the game. But rarely does this occur. Instead, the ball is soon missed by some rider; whereupon all the riders are dismounted in a hurry and become horses for their erstwhile riders, till the ball is muffed again. It is good sport, and is worth trying anywhere.

The typical Burmese football is made of strips of cane—such as are used to cane chair-seats, but heavier—wound into a hollow ball about five inches in diameter. The game with this is very simple—to describe, but not to play well. About eight players gird up, and form a circle. The object is to keep the ball flying in graceful curves through the air from one to another and not let it touch the ground or anyone's hands. One will start it across the circle with his toe; another will return it by striking it with his

234 A Quiet Game of Burmese Football. Up in the Corner is the Ball Itself Enlarged

knee. The nearest player to where it comes down will send it up again with his elbow, shoulder, or head. It takes long practise to be able to let it come down over one's head from the front, and, by hitting it with the heel, send it back the way it came. It is a mild exercise for a quiet evening in the street in front of the house, and is a game for the quieter sort of larger boys and men.

The little girls play with dolls, usually wooden or rag ones; and they play jacks with the hard brown seeds of a native tree. To correspond with rope jumping, minus the rope, they sit on their heels, and jump around while in this position, seeing who can keep it up the longest. There is a game like hop-scotch, and one like prisoner's base.

While the children play all the time or any-time, the real play time for all Burma is in the evening, beginning at eight o'clock and many times lasting all night. The cool of the day is the time to work, the heat of the day is the time to sleep, and the cool of the night is the time to play.

Nearly all the good times a Burman has, and especially an adult Burman, he has in connection with his religion. Christians are urged to carry their religion into their everyday life,

and they need to be urged. Buddhists carry their everyday life into their religion, and they do not need to be urged. If the Burman wants to see a circus, a circus-like performance is arranged for a religious feast—or *pwe*, as it is called. If he wants to gamble (and gambling is a habit among Mongolians) he gambles at the *pwe*. The feasts and sabbaths and festivals and consecrations provide the "big doings" in Burma. And certainly, when religion is conceived of as a convenience, this method has its advantages. But, in passing, we may remark that it in large part explains why it is so hard to separate a Buddhist, and particularly a fun-loving Burmese youth, from his religion. For his religion provides everything youth naturally likes to do. But it lacks the uplift.

There is the light feast, when for several nights candles innumerable—and nowadays varicolored electric lights where electricity is available—illuminate the fronts of the houses in artistic arrangement, or are set in rows along the streets.

There is the water feast just before the beginning of the rains, when water frolics of every description are all the fashion. Then look out for your good clothes. Water (seldom clean) is thrown or squirted into the windows

of passing cars or trains; and woe to the well-dressed Burmese lady in the street. She will be drenched. It is the Burmese Hallowe'en, translated in water.

A *pwe* is held in honor of some big pagoda, some historical event, a particularly holy day, or as a memorial of a dead priest. There are more or less daytime doings, but the popular time is at night. The whole celebration partakes of the nature of a street fair, or carnival. Refreshment and gambling booths line the streets, and "skin games" are common. There is boxing, and music, and dancing, and puppet shows, and parades. There is some religious ceremony connected with all of it, but it is such a side—or back—issue that the visitor would not notice it. The whole town turns out, and meets the whole countryside on the thronged streets.

The parade may come in the daytime. It is usually made up of decorated carts, men dressed—or undressed—as good and bad spirits, men at sword play, and huge imitation animals mounted on wheels. Nearly every parade "has a white elephant on its hands." Burma is sometimes called "The Land of the White Elephant," as there attaches to that animal a certain sacredness. A life-sized figure of an elephant

238 The Orchestra and the Dancers at a Pwe

will be made of bent bamboos covered with white cloth and paper. The ears, tail, and trunk are made waggable, and as the quaking spectacle rolls down the street two men in the hollow interior flap the ears and move the trunk and tail, to the great delight of hundreds of gleeful children running alongside.

There are stiffly-acted theatrical shows on gaudy stages, with sing-song conversation predominating. The puppet-shows are Punch-and-Judy affairs on a larger scale. Crude figures of animals and people are manipulated by supposed-to-be-invisible wires from above the low stage. They leap about at a great rate, and get into all sorts of mix-ups. Considerable skill is shown in handling them. Their cutting up is interesting to the foreign visitor for about half an hour; but the Burmese will sit and watch them off and on all night.

Burmese girls are famous for their dancing. They do not "trip the light fantastic toe," but twist the sinuous and supple body. In our dancing our feet show the greatest movement. In Burmese dancing the feet are the only parts of the body that do not move. Then is it dancing? Yes, it is, but the Burmese believe in letting the whole body dance, and not allowing the lowly feet to have the monopoly of it.

And this is good sense when you think of it.

A small, low platform about the size of a large bed is placed in the open square or street, and decorated a bit. The band is stationed near by, and consists of about five instruments: two crudely made drums, large and small, to correspond with the bass- and snare-drums we have, that are thumped with the fleshy part of the base of the thumb, and are kept in good tune by the players frequently smearing on their surfaces some paste of burnt rice husk; a flute-like instrument with a shrill tone; two bamboos clapped together for cymbals; and last and largest an instrument that comes nearer being a xylophone than any other instrument we know. It looks like a porch railing in circular form, and about four feet in diameter. Between each two spindles, and suspended from the top rail by a string, is a saucer-shaped piece of brass; each of these is of different size and tone from the others. The player gets in the center of the contraption, sits on his heels, and with two little wooden mallets in his hands strikes the saucers. When the music is fast and furious, as it often is, it is necessary for him to hop around in a rather lively manner.

The dancer demurely takes her place, and smiles at the audience, which applauds vocifer-

ously. Perhaps she blushes, but we can't see through the thick paste on her face. Her hair is done up tastily on her head, and some beautiful little white flowers adorn it. Her dress is the last word in Burmese fashionable female attire. Her lace jacket is made to fluff out with stiff stays and the narrow skirt trails the platform, so even her toes are invisible. Sometimes Burmese maids dance in groups, but more often they do it singly. Good dancers are in great demand, and receive high wages.

She Sways Gracefully to the Lilting Music

The music begins with a thump and a blare, and the newcomer, all eyes on the dancing figure, wonders if she is in torturing pain and going into convulsions. Her neck and body and arms twist and turn and coil in the most fantastic contortions imaginable, as she sways gracefully to the lilting strain of the band. The expression on her ashy face and in her flashing black eyes changes from comedy to tragedy, and shows in turn love, hate, scorn, indifference, and exhilarating joy, as she dances through a story in real life. There is no word nor song. It is moving-picture-like in its pantomime. The visitor says she acts silly, just like a foolish child "putting on airs." But no; there is more in it than that. Yet one must know the Burmese to understand it. All the attractiveness of the drama of oriental life is there. The gathered audience watch with keen interest, and critically appraise the ability or deficiency of every move the serpentine figure makes.

Hour after hour the performance continues, with seemingly very little variety. At long intervals the girl sinks wearily to the floor, and there is a time for rest; but very soon she is up and at it again. Families bring their mat beds to the show and unroll them on the ground. As the gay hours slip by, they gaze and gossip,

and when the night drags they eat and sleep by snatches. At quiet moments can be heard the devout drone of prayers at the nearby pagoda and the tinkle of the *htee* bells in the soft evening air. Ah, there is a lure about the lights and the colors and the moving throng and the general aspect of something doing, that appeals to the human heart and makes the Burman love his people and his religion very much indeed. Perhaps it is beside the question to ask, What about the day after? But anyway he has a good time while it lasts; and as to how much lasting satisfaction he gets out of it, we do not know, for "The East is East."

CHAPTER XIV

THE INDUSTRIAL METHOD

TEACHER, I want to learn a trade."

He was a sleepy-eyed Burmese youngster from a distant village, who had heard from afar of the new school.

"Is it so, San Hla (Beautiful Rice)?" I said cordially. "And what trade do you want to learn?"

He wiggled his bare toes in the dust for a moment, and then came out with, "To make shoes."

"Very well," and I led him over to the workshop, where several boys of his age were learning to cut, pound, and nail sole leather. He looked at the workers for a few minutes, and slowly a shade of disappointment stole over his brown face.

"How is that?" I asked.

"Teacher, I didn't want to learn to do it that way."

"Then how did you want to learn to do it?"

"I want to stand at a machine, and put

Teachers and Students of the Meiktila Technical School in the Early Years of the Institution

leather in at one side, and pull out a shoe at the other side, all finished."

And this boy was just in from a section where they use the same primitive methods and tools in everyday work that the Egyptians used four thousand years ago. Whatever else I gleaned from this encounter with young Burma, I came to know that the boys who were attracted to us would first have to be taught the right viewpoint toward labor and trades. I painfully explained to this aspirant that it would be many years before shoe-making machinery of advanced type could be introduced into Burma; and in the meantime he would have to begin at the bottom and learn to supply with his hands and a few simple tools what his people needed in the way of foot-gear. We wanted to teach our boys to meet life as it is in their own surroundings.

He answered (with his mouth) that he understood; but he went away sorrowful. Some wild report of what we offered had spoiled him for wholesome labor. This erroneous idea was not born of a desire to use *modern* methods so much as to use *easy* methods. It is the case with nearly every Burmese boy that very early in life he and work have had trouble—and they have parted company. Only stern neces-

sity unites them again. So we set out to teach them to mix brains with their work to make it easy, rather than to depend on mechanical power that they could never hope to use.

We met one of our first problems along this line in digging out the earth for the foundation of our first building. It is the custom to carry the earth in small round baskets. The Burmese women are not too proud to carry this load on their heads, by far the best and least fatiguing way for anyone to carry a burden. But the men and boys, never. So our pupils hugged the baskets to their chests and staggered along with great effort to the dumping place.

We have heard of a missionary in Africa who so pitied the poor natives carrying loads on their heads that he sent to the homeland for a number of wheelbarrows. When they arrived he showed the workmen with great delight just how to use them, and went away feeling that he had made a great strike for the uplift of sorely burdened Africa. But what was his surprise and chagrin on his return later to see the toilers putting a little earth in each barrow, and *carrying the whole thing on their heads.*

There was no danger of that with us; but, not to risk too much, we had our carpenter make a few little wooden-wheeled barrows for the job

in hand. But they were worn out by the boys playing horse with them at odd moments. It takes a long time to teach custom to right-about-face. But we persisted. The Burmans can learn much from their kinfolk across the Chinese border on the use of wheel-barrows.

We strove to show the boys and their parents that industry and work are not synonymous with toil and drudgery. To them (and this is not confined to Burma) industry suggests work, and work suggests a coolie, and a coolie suggests disgrace. We talked like this: Two boys are removing some earth. One of them, after being compelled to throw aside his basket, which he fills with his hands and not over-fondly embraces, takes pick, shovel, and wheel-barrow. He allows mud to accumulate on the end of his shovel, and pushes and strains with both hands at the end of the handle. He gives a blow with the pick from the height of a foot above the ground. He puts his load near the handles of the barrow, and trundles away with it to the tune of a whining wheel. That is toil. He is a coolie—a servant to his work. The other boy keeps his tools sharp, so that he will not have to "put to more strength." His wheel is oiled, and he makes it carry most of the load. He swings the pick from over his head

with the aid of his body, and gets a knee-push on the shovel handle. He moves twice as much material as his companion, with the same effort. That is work. He is a master workman—master of his work. It is no disgrace to start as a coolie, but it is a disgrace to remain one.

But the talking, however convincing to us, did not do much good till we resorted to the proved way of saying "Come, boys" rather than "Go, boys," and took the lead in the actual work. And as the weary months passed, gradually some of the boys began to see some dignity and joy in labor. By continually hammering away, the idea of work, if not in every case the work itself, was made popular in the school.

While we recognized that agriculture is the A B C of all industrial work, and so should be taught first in physical education, we found ourselves constrained to push a little further along in the alphabet in order to meet the peculiar conditions of the country. Burma specializes on the tilling of the ground; and withal does well at it when we take into account all the obstacles in the way. Moreover, the people want some other kind of technical training; and we were led to give them what

250 The Woodworking Boys, Their Chinese Teacher, and the Products of Their Hands

they wanted so that we might have an attraction to the school.

So we first introduced carpentry, then canework, and followed with shoe-making. The carpentry grew into furniture making as the buildings were finished. That we might be distinctive, and also that we might the more easily get a market for our wares, we adopted the mission style of furniture; although we had to watch Hong Lee, our Chinese wood-working teacher, that he didn't round off all the sharp corners. He couldn't sleep well if he finished a job and left a square corner.

An expert cane worker could not be found in Burma, although cane furniture brought good prices in the Rangoon market. It was shipped ready-made from Penang or Singapore. Here was our opportunity. After negotiating for some time with our missionaries in Singapore, we contracted for a Chinese cane worker to come up and work for us. His name was Woon Chan Koo, and he was originally from Canton. He knew only his own dialect and Malay; and it was a long journey to take alone into a strange country. But he dared, and landed from the boat at Rangoon scared pale, and clutching wildly at a copy of the *Review and Herald*, which the Singapore workers

had given him for identification. Brother Votaw met him; but they could not find one of his fellow-countrymen along the wharf street —and there are thousands of them—who could understand his dialect. A bystander observed after hearing him talk and trying in vain to catch his drift, "Well, that's *one* kind of a Chinaman."

But we found Woon Chan Koo to be a good kind, for he came through all right, and proved to be a tireless worker who turned out a first-class product. We instructed him by motions at first; but he soon picked up enough Burmese to express himself, and especially after he married a Burmese wife. He and his pupils were soon manufacturing chairs and baskets by the dozen, for which we found a ready sale.

Our best business was in leather. For a teacher we got a man from India, who had learned to make English-style shoes indirectly from missionaries. It was hopeless to compete with Chinese and Burmese cheap labor and long working hours in making the native sandals. We did not neglect instruction in this, but led on to more difficult makes. American lasts and leathers were imported and a specialty made of some better styles. We introduced the wide turned-up toe, fashionable at that

Woon Chan Koo (in the middle of the doorway) and His Class of Cane Workers

time; and soon were supplying missionaries, officials, and the many Burmese who are adopting Western shoes. Our repair work was very extensive. Bright yellow, low-cut shoes were in biggest demand with the natives.

Many boys would not stick to a trade long enough to master it; so a deposit of five rupees ($1.60) was required of those who started a trade, as a guarantee that they would stick to it for a year. After they once got to the place where they accomplished something worth while, there was not much difficulty in keeping them at it. Again, they were not anxious to work unless they received pay; and we had to adapt ourselves to this short-sighted view, and yet not spoil the boys. So we paid them two pice (one cent) an hour when they did more harm than good in waste of material; and later they got one anna (two cents) when they earned two annas. They understood the scheme, but preferred working that way rather than getting nothing but increased skill for compensation at first. Also we found that we could get on with them best, and with the least inconvenience to us, if we paid them cash in hand for their work, rather than apply their wages on their accounts. They wanted to handle the coins.

From the very start, the difficulties encountered in keeping the school out of debt were constant sources of worry. This state of affairs is nothing unusual in many institutions and families; but with the school there it had a unique setting; and it is of interest to note how the good hand of God helped us in our extremities. We started out well, being able to buy the land and erect one school building with the money subscribed locally. This was after two years hard pulling. By the close of the third year we had a mission home built with means supplied by the Mission Board.

By another strong effort we were able to raise sufficient to build our technical arts building, the same size as the school house. A mat teacher's house and boys' dormitory followed in due course. So far we were able to keep our heads above the waters of debt, but were hard pressed. After the first flush of novelty had worn off the idea of learning trades, we found it more and more difficult to get the boys to be enthusiastic over the work we were doing. We were trying to change centuries of ingrained habit, and it would take a long as well as a strong pull. The crisis was approaching that always threatens a new venture, which ends in complete failure on one hand or "getting second wind" on the other.

Our expense budget came under three heads: (1) salaries and general expense for teaching the trades; (2) salaries of literary teachers; (3) boarding the boys who lived on the campus. As to the first: without charging the boys any tuition for trades, and by paying them a minimum wage for salable products, we managed to make the trades average self-support. In the case of the book-learning department, the small tuition we were able to charge—the rate set for the government-controlled schools—was not nearly sufficient to pay the teachers' salaries—this mainly because the attendance was not large. The enrollment had run up to one hundred and forty, but had dropped as we met counter-attractions and opposing forces got to work. And the boarding department ran behind because we had taken in a number of promising orphans and cast-offs who had no money at all. Much of the expense for these, however, was made up by interested friends in America who supported worthy boys.

As a whole the school was slowly sinking, financially, although it had all the ear-marks of success in other particulars. We could not go on this way and live. What was to be done? Of course we were told by those who had

tried to do the same thing we were doing and had failed, and by those who opposed the whole aim of the school as commendable but futile, that they knew that this was just what we would come to. For Burmese boys could not be induced to work, they said, especially in connection with a school. They never knew how near their prophecy came true. So it was driven home to us that we had better give up our dream of technical education, settle back to a literary school like all the others in the country—and accept government aid.

That question of government aid had been our stumbling block from the first. The government of India and Burma has a system whereby private or mission schools may receive financial aid from the Government to the extent of half of the cost of buildings and half of the teacher's salaries. (There are no public schools in Burma such as are in the United States). Naturally, in return for such help, the Government Educational Department claims a hold on all aided institutions. In order to regulate them and have a uniform course of study, standard text books, and properly qualified teachers, a curriculum is outlined, texts are approved, and teachers are required to pass government examinations, before aid is granted.

258 The Indian Teacher and His Class of Shoemakers, Showing Some of Their Handiwork

Nearly all schools conform, and accept this aid, being unable to maintain themselves without it and at the same time compete successfully with other institutions. And there were a great many reasons why we also should accept it; for we were not at all opposed to it in principle, nor were we teaching anything that would tend to make us outlaws or seditionists. Yet we struggled on for five years without a pice from it. On the opening of our work we were urged to take the aid—urged by government officials, and it was a very grave question for some time whether we would or not. We decided against it, at least till we had tried the other way. And this because we felt that we must be free if we expected to develop our ideals successfully.

To follow the Government outlined course exactly would mean that we would have very little time for anything else. Other mission schools were finding difficulty to add Bible study and general Christian work to their program, subjects for which the prescribed curriculum made no provision. How could we find time for several hours a day for trade teaching also? With an easy-going people in a tropic clime, who were not given to study or energetic effort, it could not be done.

So we compromised by eliminating some literary subjects which were not necessary for a boy who was to learn a trade, correlated studies as much as possible, taught the boys healthful, steady habits, and sought God's blessing on our efforts. And thus we were able to get in a full program of practical work.

Then came the climax of our struggle. A conference of government officials, merchants, and manufacturers was called at Rangoon to determine what could be done in the way of technical education in the province. One man who was present told me afterward that they closed the conference with the settled conviction that nothing could be done, or at any rate that the time was not ripe for a beginning. Some sloyd subjects had been introduced into the schools, but they were largely optional, and met with little favor.

But before and after this conference we were toiling along, trying hard to prove something to the country and ourselves, and to all appearances making a complete fizzle of it. It is plain to be seen now that all that was needed was a connecting up of our interests and those of the Government. We could at least partly solve their problem of technical education, and they could wholly solve our financial one. Just

when we were in our most dire straits, one day the commissioner of education in our district made us an unsolicited visit. He took a thorough view of the whole plant, and asked many questions. When he was ready to leave he ejaculated, "Well, you are doing just what that conference in Rangoon said couldn't be done."

Almost immediately we heard from the Educational Department, urging that we take steps to get recognition. It was with some misgivings that we entered into negotiations with the officials. But red tape seemed to be the chief obstacle in the way, and they were very willing to make concessions for our sakes, since they recognized that we had really made a creditable beginning at teaching trades to Burmese youth.

After that the way was easy. We were given permission to substitute technical subjects for literary, under certain restrictions, which were very reasonable; and the elementary hand work was adapted to our needs.

Thus our land and buildings are freehold still, because we paid in full for them. Half of the teachers' salaries are paid by the Government, with the privilege of withdrawing from this arrangement at the end of any school year, if we so choose. With government recog-

nition as a drawing card, and through the efficient management of my successor in the school, Don C. Ludington, the enrollment has doubled, and brighter days are ahead. The institution is self-supporting, and boasts a surplus each year, a degree of material prosperity beyond the hope of its most sanguine well-wishers.

CHAPTER XV

THE EVERYDAY OF MISSIONARY LIFE

WE HAD been speaking of some difficulties, financial and otherwise, of living in a foreign land as a missionary, when a friend exclaimed, "Why don't you live like the natives? You say they live on a few cents a day." And our answer was, "Because we don't want to die like the natives." But this is only part of the answer that the question deserves. The home-come missionary meets also the following: "How do you like living over there? Can you really get used to it so that it seems like home? Did a snake ever get into your bed? How many tigers"—etc., etc., etc.

All such questions are perfectly natural, and deserve fair answers. There are thousands of stories of how people on the other side of the world live, and many of them are contradictory. Yet we sincerely believe that nearly all who tell them aim to give a true picture. Missionaries particularly seek to make correct impressions, nor do they knowingly exaggerate.

The Mission House at Melkitila Soon After It was Built, the Cook House and Servants' Quarters in the Rear

So we wonder where false impressions originate.

Ask three residents of the United States how people live in this country, when one of the three was reared in New York City, another in an Arizona desert, and the third on a North Dakota farm. They may all tell the exact truth and flatly contradict one another. But America is a big country. Yes, and so is the Indian Empire, with much more varied a climate and population. We will not take space to elucidate this, as any good book on life in southern Asia will show it. Reporters' viewpoints differ according to their immediate surroundings and the features which impress them most.

We will tell something of what it means for a missionary to live in Burma. Frankly, we did not like to live there—at first. Or perhaps I had better say, at second. For at first our curiosity was daily keyed up by fresh surprises and the newness of all of it, to the extent that life was a series of adventures. This keenness soon passed away, though not entirely, as there is always something new to learn in these countries as at home.

When we settled down to the routine life, then came the really hard part, the period between adventure and accomplishment. This time of

adaptation is tided over by resoluteness of soul, a firm trust in the guidance of God, and a finding of comfort in memories and hopes. Homesickness of the most virulent type will come with its heartsinkings, a few strange, acute ailments pester the body, and unsympathetic surroundings and unsatisfactory living conditions generally try the patience of the soul experience.

But the missionary goes forth expecting such enemies to try his steel. And they are only passing troubles. When the language is gotten sufficiently so that he can converse on simple topics with the people, say by the end of the first year or before; when he gets well acclimated, which does not come much before the third year; and when he sees the needy helped by, and appreciative of, his efforts—then he begins to get into the heart of native life. And there is always high satisfaction in working with the hearts of any people.

After three years we wanted to stay in Burma for all time, although of course there is always a longing to visit the home folks once in a great while; but even this wears away with the years and a furlough or two. And after being compelled to leave the field and stay away for a few years, we find the longing ever present to return to Burma for good. Every home-tied

missionary testifies to this heart hunger for the land of his exploits for God.

As to wild beasts and reptiles, much depends upon where the mission home is located. Wild animals do not attack man unless they are driven to it, or unless he purposely or accidentally disturbs them in their haunts. During our whole experience we never saw a wild elephant, never a tiger or a cobra or a wild boar except in a zoo, and very few deer, snakes, and monkeys. Deer barking and monkey chattering are common sounds in the hills, but it is difficult to get near the animals themselves.

One dark night we were riding down a steep road with our feet dangling out of the rear end of a native cart. Suddenly a chetah, a mild leopard-like member of the cat family who dotes on dog flesh, made a wild leap from an overhanging bank in an effort to seize our cartman's dog. He succeeded in badly scaring the canine and in making our blood run cold, but otherwise we suffered no harm.

We have seen four-inch centipedes as thick as your finger wiggle toward us across the living room floor; and have roused out whole nests of scorpions from the mat walls of our house; but it required little effort to keep away from the poison of these little pests and to dispatch them in a hurry.

Our worst experience with a snake occurred one night when we were returning from a visit. Snakes like to stretch out in the dust of the road in the moonlight, and it is well to be on the watch for them. Merwin, our oldest boy, was wheeling his little sister in a go-cart just ahead of me; the wheel must have run over one of these snakes, and then the boy stepped on it. He was wearing sandals and the reptile curled up and bit him on the instep. He shouted out with great pain and I urged his mother on to the house with him to get the wound opened up, while I stayed for a minute to kill and secure the snake so that we could see if it were poisonous.

In a few minutes our Burmese servant came running with a light, and on investigation said that the one I had killed was very deadly, and that we must do something for Merwin immediately if we would save his life. Meanwhile the boy was rolling on the floor in agony as the pain increased. We were distracted to know what to do and resorted to sucking the wound to get out the poison; but the servant took a light and ran out into the field to get the leaves of a certain weed that is known to be good in such a case. When these leaves were rubbed into the bite it seemed to help a little, and after some time Merwin went to sleep.

We prayed earnestly for his life and were gratified to find him not getting any worse. He was unable to walk for several days but in

Interior of the Mission House at Meiktila, Showing how Homelike it May be Made, Even to the Cat

a fortnight was all over the effects of the accident. Our man attributed his recovery partly to the weed leaves and partly to the fact that the snake was a young member of the species, whose poison was not so virulent as that of mature ones.

We found that it was best to keep the yard immediately around the house free from growth of any kind, even grass, and this had a tendency

to keep reptiles at a distance. Altogether, I do not believe we saw any larger number of snakes in Burma than we have seen during the same length of time in America.

We did not live like the natives in Burma. Dr. Brown, in his book, *The Foreign Missionary*, says, "The natives do not live; they die." The mortality is fearful. Ignorance and unsanitary conditions make for disease and death at a rate unknown in western lands. Burma is prolific in children, but oh how fast they die! The land would be in continual mourning if death affected them as seriously as it does some.

Another reason why the missionaries do not live like the natives is because western dress has grown to be distinctive of authority, and in some cases, of superiority; so it commands their respect, just as does a white face. These things are badges of power to the native and appeal to his sense of respect for leadership.

Again, foreigners can not get so accustomed to the climate that they can go about in native costume, bareheaded. However, missionaries come as near being like the sons of the soil as possible, so that they may better understand the native mind and heart. And there is no question but that the nearer one comes to living as they do, the cheaper will his living be. But,

considering the standards the missionary must maintain, with all the economy he can practise, he will find that living costs are just about the same as in America. Certain foods are cheaper, such as rice and fruits; but some foods that he must have in poor seasons, and for a change of diet, must come from abroad and are costly. A suit of light clothes costs less, but he must needs have several of them and have them washed often. Rents are lower, but what is saved there is eaten up in servant hire.

A few servants are absolutely necessary. The full complement of a household is supposed to be seventeen. But missionaries get along with one or two full-time, and a few part-time, helpers. Because the servant class are usually Indians, and caste-bound, it is difficult to get them to do more than one line of work. The cook is the necessity, because of the heat. But he doesn't want to wash dishes nor wait on the table; and he simply won't sweep, for cleaning is considered one of the lowest of scavenger jobs.

Missionaries must have servants, because both man and wife are not sent to the field to drudge and hang over a fire, but to win souls. But a few servants are not expensive luxuries. Their wages are low, ranging from $5 to $10 a month, they finding their own food, although

they "find" much of it by little bits filched from what is doled out to be cooked for master's table. But to the servant this is not stealing. It is "custom." That word is the excuse for many a privilege taken at the expense of the household budget.

The kitchen is a separate building back of the house. Its stove is a solid stone, brick, or cement table-like affair with large niches in the top to contain the fire. Wood is the fuel and the smoke escapes as it may, through door, window, or an open-work roof. The Indian chef concocts some dainty and tasty dishes with his crude apparatus. He bakes an excellent cake in an old oil can for an oven, and boils rice to flaky perfection.

It is morning of an ordinary day in our mission home. We rise at six and resort to the bathroom for a cool pour. Off every bedroom is the ten-by-twelve bath and toilet room, not, however, the elaborate affair of the West. A cement floor, with a three-inch hole in the corner for an outlet, with a large earthen jar of water and other toilet articles for furniture—this is the bathroom.

Once up and around we brew a hot drink over a litle oil stove and sip it to the accompaniment of a slice of toast for "little breakfast."

The cook has not appeared yet. Under instruction from the night before he is off at daylight to bazaar to buy the day's food. If it were big bazaar day(big bazaar comes every fifth day) we would go too, to meet the people from the whole countryside, to get a change from routine, and for economy in buying. But the cook does fairly well; in fact he gets food cheaper than we can from the dealers, though before it reaches us it is diminished in weight. Be it known that bazaar is market, a central inclosure where everyone goes to buy or sell everything.

As we bustle about the house, the *dude wallah* (milk man) knocks at the door. He has come at a swinging walk with two pails of milk slung from a pole over one shoulder. The liquid would spill over with this motion were it not that, as he passed a straw stack or tree, he grabbed a handful of straw or twigs to put into it. As he squats on the door step we put down a container, and wink our eyes as he bares one arm to the elbow, plunges a dirty hand to the bottom of the milk and fishes out his two measuring cups. Full measure given, he throws in a little for *backsheesh* (a present), and wipes up the spilled drops from the floor with the bare hand, which goes into the next customer's

milk. But never mind, we can't change him. We tried having him bring our milk in a bottle, but we could never be sure about the bottles being clean, and he always brought it immersed in the other milk. So we strain and boil his product, and let not our appetites know what our eyes see.

The *mater* is next on hand. He is the general scavenger, and always carries a broom, a stocky bunch of coarse straws which are set so far apart at their business ends that we wonder how its wielder ever manages to move the dust. But he does a fair piece of cleaning, if we insist on it, though the corners get scant attention.

This is the morning for the *dhobi* (laundryman). He appears, almost hidden under a snow-white bundle of clothes, and we get out the *dhobi* book, a record of what he took last week. He lays out the clean linen on bed and table and chairs, each kind by itself, counting them over in a droning monotone, as *mem-sahib* (the mistress of the house) checks them off. He is severely admonished to be sure to bring next time one or two articles that are missing, and roundly scolded for having broken off thirteen buttons in this week's wash. He bows to the floor in humility and promises anything, only that *mem-sahib* shall be pleased. He

has washed the clothes by beating them on a stone by the lake side, and stretching them on the grass to dry. It is surprising how snowy they are, and starched collars are finished first-class. All this for $1.60 a hundred pieces, regardless of size. Then we give him the soiled linen for this week, counting it all over carefully, and send him away with a pleasant word.

Next the *rotie wallah* with his bread basket on his head summons us with his call, and supplies a good quality of white bread. The cloth he has over it isn't the cleanest, and someone tells us he sleeps on his mixing board; but you can't believe all you hear. Anyway this is the only way to get bread, for cook can't bake it.

Then the *pannie wallah*, (water carrier), bent almost double with a huge pig-skin of water on his back, comes laboring up the steps and fills the jars in the bathroom with a swish. Also the five gallon can for drinking water is filled. When cook comes he will boil this, and put it in a porous earthen jar on a stand in the dining room; it will be cool (that is, as cool as water gets in Burma, which is usually lukewarm) for tomorrow. It must be carefully strained, too, for the *pannie wallah* walked right into the lake to get it, where hundreds of

others walk every day for the same purpose.

Cook is back from bazaar, and is doled out food for breakfast, which is served at 10:30. Meanwhile the missionary man has been about

Our Water Was Brought from the Lake in a Barrel on Wheels

his duties in school, evangelistic work, or mission business. School began early, and this is the midday recess.

The meal is of dahl, grains and milk, rice and curry, and fruit. Appetites are none too good, but there is a relish notwithstanding. Cook waits on table (with rather poor grace, for it is a disgrace) carrying over his shoulder his

general-purpose cloth (if we let him). This cloth does duty for a dozen uses, from handling hot dishes to wiping his hands and face—even to use as a drinking-water strainer, if the *mem-sahib* isn't particular. All of which goes to show that if we keep well in Burma we must watch our servants, our food and water, and our general surroundings, and yet not be too finicky about dirt if it is clean, and about germs if they are dead.

In the middle of the day the missionary ought to take a *siesta*—a nap of two hours' duration—if he would be one with the people, and be sensible. The failure to do this has sent many a worker home. After rest-hour, reading and study are indulged.

As four o'clock approaches we take a shower bath with our dipper, and change to clean clothing. Four is the calling hour, from then till six. There is a social call or two to be made, which is a part of the missionary's work. Social calls mean a great deal in the East, and open the way for gospel work. Of course at these hours also we remain at home, on certain days, and receive callers. We find our neighbors devoting plenty of time in their calendars for hospitality and visiting; but it must be done at a certain time in the day, when all are dressed up for it.

At other hours, comfort in a warm clime demands a state of undress unpresentable for callers, in their estimation.

Six o'clock or thereabouts finds us at dinner, though the people generally, foreigners and all, eat their most elaborate meal at eight. Ours is a Burmo-American vegetable dinner, served in three or four courses.

Later evening is the opportune time for rounding off the day's work in visiting interested believers and the sick, giving pictured Bible lectures in the village, planning the next day's work, and in reading or study. Before ten we are in bed, to complete a perfect missionary day.

The life is ideal and fascinating, after we settle down to it. Mingled with toil and the commonplace are the hundred and one passing interests and attractions which make life anywhere a joy—the quaintness and simplicity of the jungle folk; the freshness of early morning; the squeak of cart wheels and the distant drumming of native music; the hollow tapping of cow-bells and the bleating of goats; the majesty and force of storms and the dead quiet of noondays; the clearness of rainbows and most glorious of sunsets; the purple haze of twilight, and an endless variety of lures and delights that make Burma

Burma. While the same as other lands in many respects, yet it is different in its very similarity —which paradox needs to be lived in order to be understood.

A Missionary Group at the Hill Station, Kalaw

CHAPTER XIV

THE REWARDS OF LABOR

THE rewards of a missionary's labor are souls won for Christ. There are other rewards, and the worker gets his thrills and satisfaction from stations established, literature distributed, large school attendances, buildings erected, and reputations gained; but these are as nothing beside the real reward. It is the final incentive that keeps him in the field at work amid strain and loss and sickness and utter discouragement. The wise man said, (and he knew) "He that winneth souls is wise." He might have added, "and happy."

So, not to say there are no joys of living and seeing, of accomplishing and sacrificing for a good cause, we will simply leave them out of this story. And because there is a strong desire on the part of the folks at home to know things as they are in the mission field, we will begin with a failure—that is, a seeming failure now; but the end is not yet. The hero days of the mission endeavor are not past; but to tell the

truth about the work so that the reader gets a true picture, it is necessary to notice the plodding heroes as well as the meteoric ones.

Christian readers of these lines can never know the long trail that leads from rank heathen customs, modes of thought, and moral ideals, to the heights of Christianity. From the human standpoint it is small wonder that some stumble in the Way, and fall to rise again no more. The wonder is that they continue at all, with all there is to overcome. But God's love and power are wonders, and that's how they can —and do. Would you see a life now in the making upward, with its ups and downs—just now, downs? Would you follow a biography the sequel of which is yet to be written because it is yet to be lived? Then read the story of Ba Sain (we will call him Ba Sain because that is not his name). Every missionary has these unfinished biographies stored away in his heart, which are added to from day to day. And each is unfinished because he still hopes and prays and works to the purpose that the last chapter shall be as happy as the latest is disheartening.

Ba Sain boarded the train with all the nonchalance of his fifteen Burman years. Head up, walk a swagger, lips ready to accost any and

every one with a pleasantry, he sat down on the narrow board seat of the third-class compartment, and deposited his bundle by his side. With the same air, he lighted a cigarette, and blew smoke out the window, his feet perched on the opposite seat. He looked the personification of self-satisfaction. Nothing mattered.

But this was all on the outside. Ba Sain was troubled. The careless demeanor was habitual, but beneath it there slumbered a conscience. He wanted satisfaction, that boon we all want. His mother had been a Buddhist nun, and had lost her mind; and his father was rather indifferent about him. He was going to live with his married sister in Rangoon. Perhaps the great city held what he desired.

The long train curved snakelike among the far-reaching ricefields, Ba Sain looked out, but did not see. He was thinking of a legend of the great Gautama, which his father had told him that day. In a former existence, Gautama had been a calf, and when his mother drank at the brook, he inadvertently drank from a little way up-stream, and muddied the water which his mother was drinking. For this breach of good manners he was fated forever after to have all water become muddy as soon as he raised it to his lips. Strange truth, this!

Worshipping before a Buddha in a Sacred Cave

Ba Sain recalled a recent experience in which his susceptible conscience had been overurged to get him to seek the jungle places near Maul-

main, where the priests lived an ascetic life and had to be supported in their walk because their food was "vegetation." He sought the peace they seemed to have, but it was not for him. Perhaps the Good Man would yet lead him in the true way. But just now he was on the point of giving up everything that disciplined, and starting to do just as he pleased. What was the use of trying, anyway? Other people were happy, why shouldn't he be? This endless trying-to-do-right-and-can't was maddening. The Christians were the best favored, and hadn't their God helped them to rule almost the whole world? Yet every one said that Burma had become more wicked, and that there was more disease, since the Christians came. The puzzle of things as they are was too much for him.

As the train rolled on, vague plans for the future became a part of his reverie—vague because he knew so little about the city and its ways. With but a change of clothing and his ticket to Rangoon, he must now make his own way in the world; and what place would his scant education find for him? He was eager and willing, but—Nicotine just then called for another puff, and on suiting the action to the desire, he found that the cigarette had "gone dead." And his matches were gone, too. How

careless! (No, how providential!) He looked around, and saw a man and a boy watching him.

"Is there a match with you?" he asked; and after he said it, he noticed that the man had been reading a book, and there was a pleased expression on his face.

"No," came the answer, "I don't drink smoke; so I have no need of matches."

"Strange," thought Ba Sain; and he asked aloud, "What book do you read?"

"The Bible."

"O, a Christian!" and there was a tone of dampened friendliness in his voice. "You are a Christian, and you don't drink smoke? How is that? I learned to smoke cigarettes in a Christian school. Doesn't the Christian's God drink smoke?" This in a bantering voice.

The man looked displeased, and the boy laughed.

"No, God doesn't drink smoke; and true, enlightened Christians do not either. It is a bad habit, bad for the body, and the mind, and the heart. I know a Christian school where neither the teachers nor the boys drink smoke. I wish you could go there."

Well, here was a new thing in Burma, and

Ba Sain caught at the idea. He was informed of a school at Meiktila where the boys were taught morals and hand-work as well as the book lessons the other schools taught. Yes, poor boys could have a chance; for the tuition fees were low, and if a boy were diligent he could earn his way. He would emerge from the school with a trade, a character, and a trained mind.

Ba Sain questioned in his mind about "coolie work" being in any way desirable, but here was a chance to get "book learning," and it was not to be scorned. This well-appearing man was a teacher in the school, and was now on his way there. Perhaps it was all untrue; but he was absorbed in it, and the time passed quickly till the train arrived at Pegu. Here the erstwhile fellow-travelers parted, and in two hours Ba Sain was being jostled by the crowd at the Rangoon station.

His sister lived in a poorer section of the noisy city. Burma's metropolis seethed like a caldron at this season. The intense heat was accentuated by the crowded condition. The choky dust, the filth of the foreign element, the rabble among whom he was as nothing, disgusted him in a short time. What chance here without money? Then he opened his heart

about that school, and a sympathetic sister heard with interest. It appealed to them. A will was born, and a way was sure to follow. Somehow she got together ten rupees for him, and half of it was spent for a ticket to Meiktila. God bless her sacrifice! She is dead now, but that was the greatest thing she ever did.

The boy came without previous notice or arrangement; and the next morning, before daylight, he was landed at the "desired haven," but hardly knowing "whither he went." There were no likely persons astir to guide him, so he sat down on a step and waited—waited for some one to come; for he was sure some one would come. At daylight the very boy whom he had seen with the teacher on the train passed that way. Hailing him and making explanations, the rest was easy. We took him on the recommendation of his efforts to reach us.

At first he was disappointed. His natural love of a big show was not satisfied. There was only a rented building, and no school compound. No trades were taught yet, and there were but few boys, compared with the school he had attended. But it offered a better chance for an education than did Rangoon or home. Little did he realize that an institution is as great as its principles, and that the most privi-

leged persons in the world are those who do not despise the "day of small things," but are pioneers in a noble work. The teachers treated him kindly, and took a personal interest in helping him to improve; and soon he felt at home, with one exception—the hated Christianity.

He had held the indifference of youth, even to Buddhism, before; but now that he was feeling its hold on him loosen almost before he knew it, he was roused to fight for it with desperation. Ba Sain was honest and energetic, and these very traits made him an ardent disciple of Gautama, when his cause was assailed. But nothing was said to discountenance his faith in the Buddha. The simple truth was told, but it brought forth many a hard-fought argument with the teachers. And this worthy champion of heathenism had the self-confidence to believe that he could reason the best. Perhaps he was right. But there was that Book. He couldn't fight a book, and yet its contents and spirit were fighting him every day.

Like others who, in spite of their pride, are compelled to acknowledge to themselves that they are gradually losing ground, Ba Sain now tried to hide his discomfiture by smoking, by learning to swear in English and practising

the art in the hearing of the missionaries, and by making himself generally objectionable. Contempt was his last weakhold. His cult sadly needed defending, but he had made poor work at its defense.

Down by the lake, one day, he sat despondently looking at the lap of the wavelets on the pebbly shore. All at once, in that way familiar to Christians who seek God, there flashed into his prejudiced mind a little light. Why, these people had the satisfaction that he had vainly sought! Their religion helped them to live lives of peace in spite of the glaring inconsistencies of its believers. And after all, isn't that all that is worth while? Surely the truth alone can beget peace. Why hadn't he seen it before? Gautama tells us *how* to do right, but Christ helps us *do* it. The great gospel truths which had been seeking entrance to his heart, had at last found lodgment. And once entered, they pervaded his whole knowledge, and suffused his entire thought and life. Gautama merits. Jesus saves. This is Christianity. O that he had only known it before! Every one would accept it if they only knew. He must tell them. And right there was born in his soul the saving spirit that was not to pass away. Again nothing mattered, but how different the feeling!

Ba Sain was forward, and fought a good battle on either side, when he was sure he was right. He grasped the Bible truths with avidity, and imparted as he learned. At almost one stroke he stood forth a man in Christ. Rarely are seen changes so complete as his. Enslaving habits were dethroned; the feasts and fasts and foolishness of Gautama-as-he-is-worshiped lost their lure; rice and curry became secondary; and he boldly sought "first the kingdom." No work was too hard, no place too humble. Like Samuel, he delighted to keep in order the house of God. Nothing pleased him better than to lead his schoolmates to Christ. Three years from the time he came to us, he was preceptor in the school. Rising bravely above objectionable character traits within and strong opposition from without, he stood, just merging into manhood, at the beginning of usefulness for God, a trusted servant, an intelligent student, an energetic worker, a monument to missionary effort.

Then came a change, gradual at first, so that we did not realize its significance till it was too late to stave off the catastrophe. Perhaps we were over-confident, and we, as well as he, had to be taught a lesson. For our hopes centered in Ba Sain as our first fruits, an example to the

flock. Little did we think that he was to fall. And when he did fall, the bottom seemed to have dropped out of our effort. If Ba Sain could not stand, who could? And what was the use of working for them? How much we had to learn in not trusting to appearances, and in not judging all by one.

Without any warning, the boy suddenly disappeared. We found that he had borrowed what money he could from his associates, and had gone no one knew where. In western countries it is not easy for a boy to run away from home and friends. Usually, after a brush against the cold world, he is glad enough to return. We say of the truant, "O, he'll come back." But the world isn't cold in Burma, physically or socially. No fire is absolutely necessary except to cook food, and fifty cents would buy enough clothing for a year's wear. Food is cheap, and the people are hospitable. It is surprising how they will take in total strangers and feed them for days at a time, passing them on to neighbors when it gets to be an old story. As a last resort the runaway may easily join the priests, shave his head and don a yellow robe, and through the medium of the begging bowl procure a good living with little effort.

But our young student sought the friends of his childhood who had became gay youths. Being of good address, and with a polish and education that had been given him at great sacrifice, he soon secured a position as a clerk in a European store at a good wage. There was much idle time, and this was spent in fulfilling the desires of his heart. Thanks to his training and the real presence of God in his life, he did not go to the limit in riotous living. But misfortune came. Some of the things he had bought were stolen; and the trunk containing all his clothes fell off a ferry-boat into the river.

All this we did not know till afterward. Several months after he had disappeared he came among us as suddenly and as unexpectedly as he had gone. In spirit, we received him as the father did the prodigal, and his heart was melted. Ever since, he has called me his father, and I am his father today. He made restitution in every way he could; and humbly started at the beginning again to win back his reputation. There were scars left that could not be effaced; but are any lives free from them? He rose higher and higher in trustworthiness, and became especially noted for industry and honesty.

A year passed, and changes were made in the school. We were transferred to Rangoon, and Ba Sain was bitterly disappointed at our leaving. He was very jealously attached to those who had brought him the light, as are all who come out of darkness. Long used to visible objects of worship, it is difficult for them to see the invisible, and so they become devotedly attached to their immediate benefactors.

He wanted to try selling the products of our shoe-making department on the road; so he was sent to travel about the country and take orders. He started with high hopes, and shoes by parcel post were being sent on his trail at a good rate. Then suddenly the orders ceased coming, and he disappeared. Weeks passed, and we could find no trace of him anywhere. Had he failed us again? It seemed hopeless to try to help him; but we clung to our faith.

One day, long after he had dropped out of our knowledge, I received a letter from him at an address I had never known. It told a strange story. He had visited his old home in his travels; and his father and older brother had concocted a scheme to rescue him from the clutches of Christianity, since they believed he had been forced, or duped, into accepting it, and had been imprisoned at the school. While

he slept they took away his clothes, and left only the barest necessities for decency. Later his brother, who was a forest guard in the employ of the government, took him away off into the jungle country many miles from the railroad, and kept him there by force. But the boy managed to communicate with me through another guard he had met, who mailed his letter. He wanted me to tell him what to do.

I was rather non-commital in my answer, for the law provides that children, even when they attain considerable age, are under the control of their parents and older brothers. My letter might fall into the hands of the brother, and I did not want to misrepresent the Christian attitude. That is just what happened to the letter; and the captive was placed under more careful watch.

We prayed, and Ba Sain planned; and at last he made his escape. With difficulty he made his way to our nearest station only half clothed, and there received money to pay for clothing and his fare to Rangoon. This experience had a sobering effect upon him, and he was more than ever moved to work for God.

About this time we were opening a training school at Lucknow, India, for higher students to

get a final fitting for gospel work. It seemed best to send Ba Sain there for the course of two years. Soon reports came that he was doing good work in the school, and he wrote glowing letters of his joy in the work. He was allowed

The Class at Woodwork in the Industrial Building

five rupees (about $1.60) a month for doing extra work, and with this he bought, one at a time, most of our denominational books, and read them diligently. As the period of his training neared completion he gave more and

more promise of becoming a successful evangelist for his own people.

But there was something the matter with Ba Sain. Perhaps he was too forward and independent. He had a misunderstanding with some of his superiors, and ended by going back to Burma and taking a position as an office worker with a commercial firm in Rangoon. And there he is today. But he writes that there is still something tugging at his heart, urging him to give this message to his people.

In spite of his many failures, Ba Sain was always an inspiration to me because of the wonderful transformation that was worked by God in his life. He was my first-born in Burma —the firstfruit of labor.

An entirely different story is that of Peter, the Karen boy. Pastor Votaw had stood forth in the General Conference of 1909 and had eloquently pleaded for this people in these burning words:

"I must speak in terms the strongest that I can command in regard to the crying need of laborers to begin work among the Karens. I feel sure that no yet unentered territory presents so strong a plea for help, and it is a ques-

tion in my mind whether any call for help which has been, or shall be, presented at this Conference is deserving of more immediate consideration than this plea. Ever since we have lived in Burma, we have written and pleaded for some one to come to give this glorious message to the simple-minded hill folk of the mountains of Burma. Possessing such traditions as they do, they are peculiarly susceptible to the influence of the gospel. Many have speculated concerning the folklore of the Karens. Where and how did they obtain it? It is jealously guarded, and handed down from generation to generation. In outline, if not in absolute detail, it agrees with the Scriptural narrative, including the account of the forming of woman from the rib of man, the fall, the flood, etc. 'Because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God,' the knowledge of their Creator was withdrawn from them, not, however, without the promise being left to them that the knowledge of the true God should again be brought to these whom he had temporarily cast off. 'White foreigners,' coming in ships, were to be the bearers of the good tidings. Those who have not yet accepted Christianity represent their present condition by the following illustration: A father and his children were

traversing a narrow foot-path on the mountain-side. At a convenient place on a ledge of rock the father left his children while he went elsewhere. A tiger was seen approaching. Seized by fear, the children, to save themselves, cast a pig over the cliff to the approaching tiger. 'Thus,' they say, 'we sacrifice to the demons only because we fear them, not that we would worship them.'

"Already thousands have turned to Christianity, and it is not strange, since they have such a favorable predilection for the gospel. The Baptists claim some 40,000 communicants among them, I am told. Other missions also have flourishing congregations. They make excellent Christians, and the change for good which Christianity has made, and is making, in them is witnessed to in emphatic terms by all who are in a position to speak intelligently.

"The Karens number about three-quarters of a million, and are divided into three main tribes. They live almost entirely in the hills, or in the low land immediately adjacent. Whoever begins work for these people must expect hard work, for it is difficult to visit their mountain villages; but surely the results will pay abundantly. O that God might lay upon some strong men and women the burden of this work!

Who will become the apostle of this great message to these hungry souls? Would it not be worth more, far more, than the sacrifice it demands to be able to stand with the redeemed of this people on the sea of glass and join with them in the song of Moses and the Lamb? My soul has been burdened as I think of the Karens still waiting for the truth. I have promised before God that I will leave nothing that lies in my power undone in my efforts to secure some one to begin this work."

The first one to answer this call came a year later, in the person of Miss Mary Gibbs, from Kansas (now Mrs. DeNoyer, and still an ardent apostle to the Karens). She mastered their language in a little time; but was unable to get out among them alone in their inaccessible hills. But there were other ways. While taking a rest in a hill station she became acquainted with some neighboring Karens, and persuaded three boys to attend our school, which was just starting. Strong inducements had to be offered, for the hill-born love their hills. They had been given Christian names,—Peter, John, and Tom. Hardy fellows in their teens, they walked thirty miles to the railway—which wonder they had never seen before—and arrived the following day at the school. They

proved to be good workers, all three, Peter starting to learn carpentry, John shoemaking, and Tom cane-work. A Karen boy has work

The Meiktila School Group in Late Years

in his bones. He couldn't coax a crop out of the thin soil of his narrow valleys and steep hillsides if he had not. Besides being industrious and steady, they were fast becoming skillful.

But those home hills were in sight from the school. Their blue retreats looked so cool on the hot days. They are so hard for even the native of the plains to resist. The boys wanted to

go home for a visit, promising to come back. We permitted them to go with some hesitancy, for we did want to get a start among the Karens, and the youth are the hope of the people. But our worst fears were not realized. In a few days Peter returned—but all alone. He was the only one who didn't peter. Although misnamed, he is a plodder, and says little. Something stronger than the beauty of his childhood haunts drew him to us. I can't explain it, only that it was the same drawing power that constrained us to go more than half way to meet him.

Peter was, and is, an unromantic hero; but he is one of the elect. He was baptized, for there was no better way, now that he knew the truth. He toiled through many difficulties, for he had the Burmese to learn as well as all his studies, including English. He won by sticking. Then be became a missionary in turn. Again he went home for a few weeks, and when he returned he brought three other Karen boys with him. So they were preparing for a great after-work among their people.

In the meantime, G. A. Hamilton and his family had come from California to give themselves to the Karens. As the way opened, a station was established at Kamamaung, sixty

miles up the Salween River from Maulmain. It is a splendid location on a promontory overlooking the wide sweep of the river. Though it is in a wild country, where the barking deer are heard, and signs of tigers, elephants, wild boars, and snakes are abundant, yet it is in the midst of the Karen people. The jungle was cleared, and as money came a mission home was erected. Miss Gibbs joined the family, and soon a little dispensary took form. Being a very efficient nurse, she was in her element. This was the entering wedge; for the people were very shy. But physical pain and sickness seek friends. They carried the sick and injured to her from many miles around. Every day brought its novel and interesting experiences. The young people in a home conference raised money to buy a motor launch for use on the river and creeks, and soon it was chugging away to remote villages on errands of relief.

When the station was well established, Eric Hare and his wife from Australia took charge, and the Hamiltons and Miss Gibbs moved on to other fields. Then came the problem of a school. It was hard to get the parents to see much light in making a sacrifice to educate their children; but there was a possibility of a few pupils, and a start must be made. And Peter

was ready. Hadn't he been preparing all these years for just such an opportunity. He was called to Kamamaung. Marrying a good little wife from among the people there, he started in to educate their children and win their hearts. He is succeeding at both.

And this isn't all the story. That John, who went home and stayed there, acted later just like another John, whose surname was Mark. You will remember that Mark turned back from Paul and Barnabas because of the hardness of the way; but afterward Paul says he was profitable to him for the gospel. So John, the Karen, afterward repented and went back to the school at Meiktila. He got a good training and now has joined Peter at Kamamaung. Peter and John,—a good combination. There is a glorious work before them for their kinsmen in the flesh.

Space fails to tell of others who shine as rewards of labor. These are average cases met by the missionary. Nothing wonderful, the way the world counts wonderful things, but so satisfactory as monuments of grace.

And we would not forget that these same boys were able to stay in school during the years of their training through the steady gifts of a few faithful souls in America, who sent money

regularly every month for their support. One of these benefactors earned her gifts, and her own living, by sewing. Our boys are fast friends of these faraway home missionaries whom they have never seen; and I do not believe heaven will present any happier scene than will be afforded in the meeting together of these globe-separated friends when missions are no more.

CHAPTER XVII

THE WAY OUT

IN THE land of pagodas, and in all lands, the only way out of the task of missions is straight through. And as to the way through, see a picture of the light-keeper.

He was a little wizened old man, and he sat there on the smooth stone pavement with his knees at his chin and his arms folded across them. With only a rough loin cloth and a thin armless shirt for garments, his one touch of color was a wisp of silk jauntily draped over his mop of black hair. He had a vigil to keep and he was keeping it. His only movements were a rolling of his wad of *kun* from cheek to cheek, and the roving of his dark eyes from the candles to the throng and back again to the candles.

The great pagoda rose high above him into the sultry tropic night, its pinnacled top seeming to swim in the semidarkness. Up there the little silver bells that fringed the golden *htee* jingled lightly in the gentle stir of a breeze. Below was a jargon of noise, and light—blinding, dazzling

Where the Little Old Man Kept His Lights Burning

light. For the joyous light feast was on, and the famous Shwe Dagon was receiving its pilgrims by the tens of thousands. The shrine-cluttered hilltop resounded to myriads of merry voices, the thump-thump of drums, and the booming of deep-toned bells. Innumerable calloused feet tramped over the slippery flags and trampled on one another at the choked stairways. Round and round the consecrated circle the mincing and gaudy processions wound their way amid the blare of bands and the glare of lights. But through it all the little man sat there, while his eyes roved from the candles to the throng and back again to the candles.

Gayety and laughter were the order of the evening. Weird and riotous music bade the dancing girls be nimble; and puppet shows drew a thousand eyes. Demure maidens in gorgeous silks went sliding by on their pretty slippers, the bunches of fragrant flowers tucked into their hair delighting the nostrils of the loitering crowds. Even the beggars reveled on this night of nights, for Liberality and Prodigality walked abroad, and Burma was rollicking with joy. Still the little man sat there, and still his eyes roved from the candles to the throng and back again to the candles.

His tiny lights were set close together all the

way around the lower edge of his family shrine, built and dedicated with great ceremony in his boyhood. A signal honor this, to be permitted a place at the great Shwe Dagon for the ancestral devotions. The flickering flames must be kept alight to do homage to the beneficent Lord Gautama of long ago.

A fitful gust fanned a few of the diminutive lights to more rapid consumption; and at last the watcher rose, selected a few fresh candles from a pile at his feet, lighted each one from the expiring flame of its predecessor, and pressed it into place on the dying ember of the other. Then, returning to his place, the former position was resumed, and the alert eyes took up again their roving from the candles to the throng and back again to the candles.

Hour after hour through the long night the vigil was kept. The crowds thinned and dwindled slowly away. The music died to an occasional drumming, and the big gas-lights were dimmed. Coolies drowsed in the corners; and the stairway yawned for lingering devotees. Dawn showed gray in the east, and soon a shaft of day caught the tip of the golden *htee* far overhead. Slowly the little ring of flame paled to a sickly hue in the rising glory of the sun; but morning found the little old man unchanged,

while his eyes roved from the candles to the dawn and back again to the candles.

Devoted religious fervor—devoted persistently, though hopelessly, to "the light of Asia," the light that fails. Yet devoted to a degree that points the way for the keepers of the "Light of the world."

Then keep the mission lights burning, and light the way to the end of the task.

Now hear the parable of a treasure in a field.

One day long ago a poor Burmese rice-grower was splashing back and forth and round and round after his slow bullocks and crude plow. His little plot was leased from the village headman, and the hire of the ground was so high that he barely managed to supply rice and curry for his family twice a day throughout the year. He looked at the future through hopeless eyes, and struggled on, getting less out of life than the beasts he drove.

On a raised spot at one corner of his field lay the remains of a small pagoda. No one knew who had built it. No one had repaired its decay. From a trim little whitewashed spire it had crumbled to a mound of mossy bricks, with just one side of its once proud uprightness remaining in air. For years our hardy farmer had looked longingly at the ground

it occupied, for he needed every inch for cultivation. And, acting on the spirit of his desire, his willing plow had cut a little into the foundations whenever it came near, until today the very support of the structure itself was threatened.

He stopped the bullocks for a rest, and they brushed against the pile and began to pull at the succulent weeds at its base. An uprooted grass tuft started some earth falling, followed by dusty old bricks; and man and beasts were just able to get out of the way before the ancient pile toppled over. And there, uncovered, was an opening into a little hollow place. Only a moment the man hesitated; and then he began to tear away the bricks and to reach below; for were not treasures sometimes hidden beneath pagodas? The very fear of the people to disturb a shrine made it a safe hiding place for a miser's treasure.

In a few minutes his feverish search was rewarded; a box, containing handfuls of blood-red rubies, and jade, and old coins, and a rotting bag of gold ornaments. He was rich at last. Oh, the ecstasy of it! He gloated over the great find in a delirium of joy. But no, the treasure was not his, because the field was not his. The thought came like a cloud

to darken the golden prospects. Yet there was no one near. Replacing the box and covering it with debris he left his munching bullocks and ran for home, formulating a plan as he went.

The faithful wife shared his secret and her business instinct perfected the plan. They could not hope to buy a small part of the field, for owners will not break up their possessions; and besides, it would arouse suspicion. How natural for them to buy the ground they had cultivated so long. But, the price! It was sure to be far beyond their slender resources. Yet they must have that field to get the treasure. They tried in vain to borrow; and then began to sell. First went the bullocks and plow and cart; then the seed-rice, and all extra clothing they had. But they did not come near getting enough. Next the little house and all it contained went to swell the sum; and they built a mat booth for a home. The man was called a lunatic by his neighbors; and, while they had no sympathy for him, they pitied his poor family.

Yet the value of the land was still beyond what they could rake and scrape, and they were in despair. Then a last desperate method to get money suggested itself—so cruel, so hazardous, that few would risk it. But it was

possible, and they decided to make the attempt. It was nothing less then to sell themselves in order to buy that field. The treasure once theirs they could buy back all they had sold, and more. With tears streaming down their faces they parted with their children for a goodly sum, paid by a rich neighbor in lieu of the life-long services of the promising little ones. There was every chance that something might happen so that the fortune would yet slip their grasp and they would be unable to pay the increased price that the purchasers would be sure to ask for a redemption of all they had sold. But there was no going back now. The required amount still not reached, the plunging man sold his wife into servitude; and, putting his affairs into the hands of a trusted friend, as a last surrender, *he sold himself*. There was no other source of revenue. But the purchase price was reached. His friend secured the field, with a clear title to all that pertained to it, and unearthed the treasure.

And lo, what a transformation! Exultingly the now wealthy farmer went from place to place and redeemed at handsome prices all he had sold. Their wealth and joy henceforth was untold; and when the villagers learned how he had become rich, they called him "the wise."

Robert A. Beckner and His Wife, Successful Missionaries to Burma

It will take our all to buy the field, but when our all is paid the field will be bought.

And see, in the way the gospel of the kingdom is now going, a prophecy of how it will be finished in the earth.

A trained missionary and his wife established a station at a strategic point in a language area of a heathen country. They had a full realization that their message must be proclaimed in this generation. They knew three facts that made their task plain; First: that all the people in their section of the world would not be converted to their belief; for the gospel of the kingdom is to go as a witness only. Second: that the gospel would not continue to be witnessed at the same rate it has gone for the last hundred years; for God will cut it short at the end, and he will do a quick work. Third: it would not be necessary for them to go to every individual in their area, for their efforts would be multiplied by native helpers; and events would drive many people to come to them.

Yet the greatness of the task staggered them with its magnitude. However, with firm faith in God's power to accomplish the seeming impossible, they settled down and began at the beginning. And that beginning was a home

established, a family altar set up, and friendly relations formed with the neighbors. Then they attacked the language. The best part of every day for a year was given to gaining facility in the vernacular; and as they learned they interpreted their hope into the words of those who lived near by. In time the community found that they had come to stay, to stay to do good, and to stay to do good for others.

They started a Sabbath school, though at first they taught only each other; they started a day school, though it began with a few children clustered about the teachers' knees; they started a dispensary, though it consisted at first of only a few bottles of simple remedies and a pail and cloths; they started a publishing work by translating a single leaflet and having it printed at a native press. However primitive, every agency of successful gospel propagation was begun. And soon all grew.

The missionaries came into contact with thousands of natives in the course of a few years' work; yet seemed to make but little impression on the great majority of them. But a few able men were won and trained to work, and they in turn were able to establish out-stations and extend the influence of the leaders. The missionaries sought to impress every heart they

A Group of Missionaries and Their Native Helpers at an Annual Gathering in Rangoon

touched with a few simple facts; that Jesus saves men from sin, and is soon to come to this earth; that the Bible is the guide book to heaven, and that it foretells certain world events which will be signs of the near approach of Christ. Hundreds came and went, children attended school and passed on, scores were helped physically and scattered to the four winds; and very few forgot the words of truth dropped by the missionaries.

Then the Great War struck the world like a flash of lightning. The news of the awful conflict spread to the remote corners of the globe. It is remarkable how quickly news flies from mouth to mouth among peoples who have no railroads, telegraphs, telephones, newspapers, nor any other rapid means of communication. Around the camp-fires of savages, about the rice-pots of ignorant toilers, in the little markets of far-off villages, in the councils of heathen fathers, rose the inevitable question, "What does it all mean?" And always coupled with this came the other question, "What is coming next?" Then in many a center rose up a man or a boy who had heard the wondrous story that echoed every day at the mission station; and he would tell the little he knew,—just enough to whet the desires of the people for more.

Soon from many quarters messages and messengers began coming in to the gospel center asking for answers to the great question that was on the lips of all, "What next?" And the faithful missionaries gave the answer in printed form to every comer, instructed the inquirers, and thanked God that their message, though unpopular, was as inseparably connected with world events, which are popular, as a vital answer is connected with a burning question. Wherever the question rose the answer was forthcoming, and far and wide went the stirring message of impending catastrophe to a world of wickedness, and glorious deliverance for the people of the true God.

When such stations are established and maintained in every language area on earth, and the warring nations gasp in the last throes of strife, then the Spirit of God will move upon whosoever will to seek him for salvation, the missionaries will be ready to bear witness, "and then shall the end come."

THE END

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